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# CUSA

## The Story of the Churches of the Congregational Union of South Africa

by GEO. P. FERGUSON



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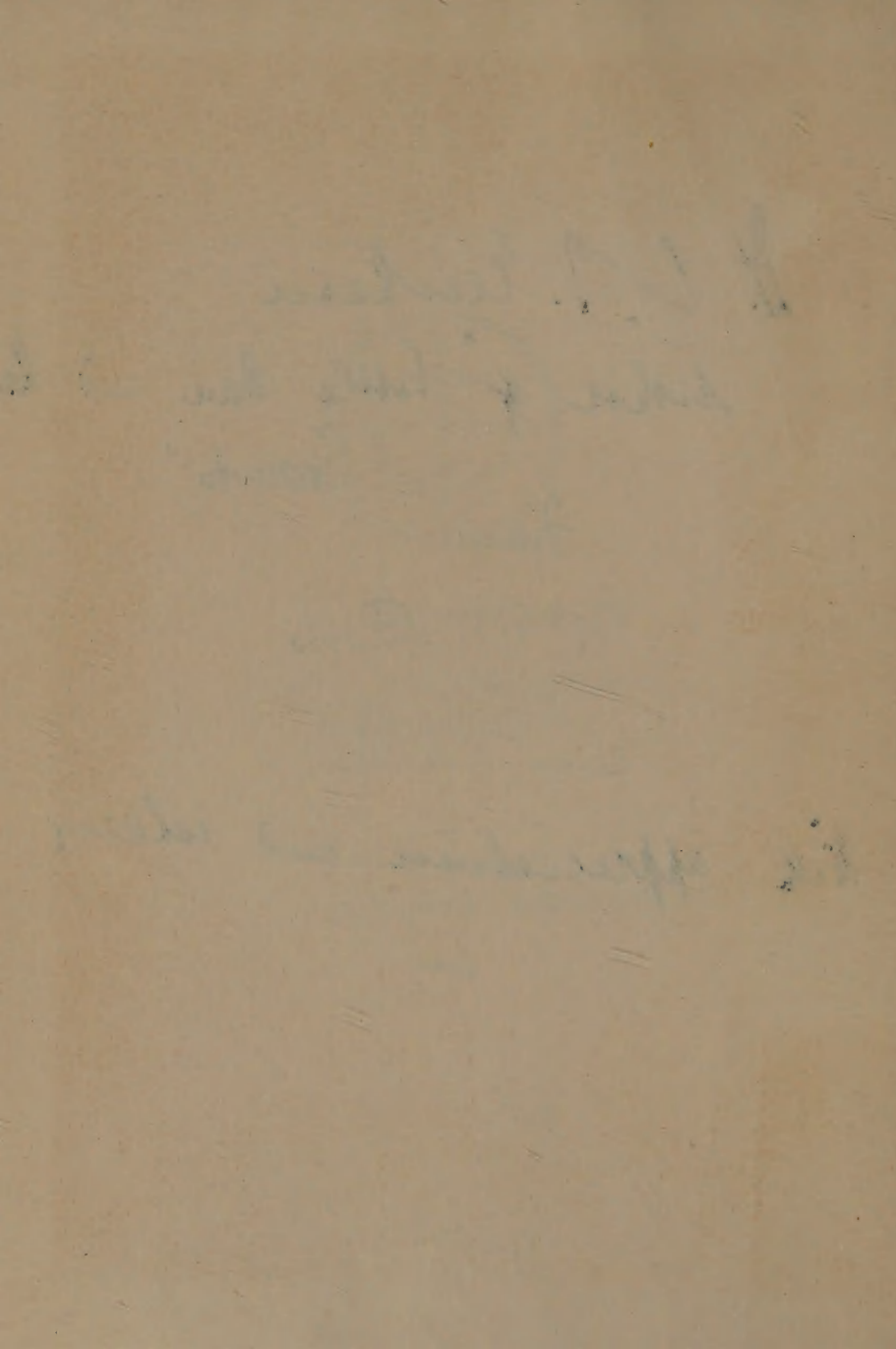
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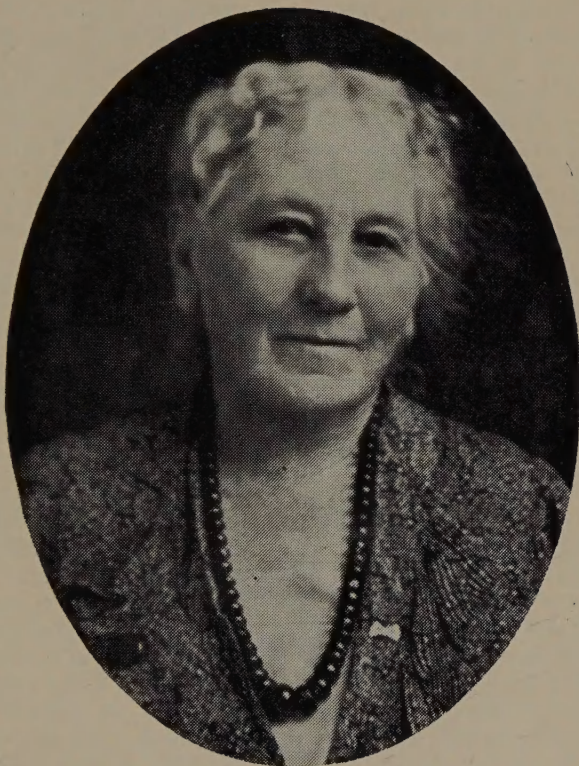
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# CUSA.

The Story of the Churches  
of the  
Congregational Union  
of South Africa





EMILIE J. SOLOMON

Called to the Chair of C.U.S.A., 1937.





## INTRODUCTION.

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This book is issued by the Congregational Union of South Africa for the use of the members of its Churches. But it has a wider appeal. It is a contribution to present day Missionary enterprise. John Mackenzie once said that South African Congregationalism is Missionary endeavour in its second phase. Here will be found recorded how the labours of the early L.M.S. Missionaries gave birth to Independent Churches; how these infant Churches were taken in hand by a handful of European Christians, were taught with many stumblings to stand on their own feet, and have been led under the guidance of God's Spirit, into an organised body of self-supporting and self-propagating Christian Churches. It has not been an easy process. It is the story of the birth-pangs of the African people, both Coloured and Native. The discerning reader may see in the story an uprush of spiritual energy such as in the first century gave the Christian Church to the world.

It has not been possible, for want of space, to follow the advance of the L.M.S. Missions beyond the boundaries now occupied by the Churches of C U S A. The great story of the Bechuana, Matabele and Central African Missions, has been omitted. For the same reason the fine work of the American Board in Natal, the Transvaal and East Africa has no adequate mention. But it is not forgotten that those also are an essential part of the contribution of the Congregational spirit to the solution of Africa's problems.

The writer acknowledges his indebtedness to many helpers who have furnished the multitude of small details which together make up the book. Chief among these are Mr. D. Chamberlain of the L.M.S., who lent valuable papers, and with much labour of research sent

extracts from letters; and Mr. G. H. Dunn of Cape Town whose invaluable collection of Year Books and Magazines, together with indexes of their contents, have helped make the book possible.

Also thanks are due to Rev. W. E. Morgan, who read the proofs, and to Rev. R. J. Cooke, who supervised the making of the blocks for the illustrations.

GEO. P. FERGUSON.

Pretoria, 1940.

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## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXT.

C U S A.: The Congregational Union of South Africa.  
L.M.S.: The London Missionary Society.  
C.M.S.: The Colonial Missionary Society.  
W.D.A.: The Western District Association.  
S.W.D.A.: The South Western District Association.  
M.D.A.: The Midland District Association.  
Natal D.A.: The Natal District Association.  
N.D.A.: The Northern District Association.

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NOTE.—The members of the CUSA family of Churches are organised separately according to race. The distinctions are indicated in the text as follows:—

|      |   |
|------|---|
| (E.) | after the name of the centre indicates a European Church. |
| (C.) | " " " " Coloured "  |
| (N.) | " " " " Native "  |



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*Here am I, Lord Jesus; Thou knowest I have no will of my own, since I gave myself unto Thee, to be spent in Thy service, according to Thy pleasure; prevent me only from doing anything in this great service in a carnal and self-sufficient spirit, and lead me in the right way, if there be any way of wickedness in me.*

Prayer of van der Kemp when accepting  
appointment to South Africa.

*A Missionary often shares in common the desires and aspirations of a great conqueror.*

Journal of J. L. Kraft, pioneer Missionary  
of the Church Missionary Society to East  
Africa.

## CHAPTER I. BEGINNINGS.

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Our South African story begins with a meeting of eight Ministers in Baker's Coffee House, Cornhill, London, on May 4th, 1794. That is a long time ago. Baker's Coffee House was in those days a favourite place of meeting for all manner of religious and philanthropic undertakings. These eight met to consider Christ's command to go into all the world to preach the Gospel. It was a turbulent period in world history. The Napoleonic wars were at their height, society was unsettled, crime was rampant, unemployment and sheer hunger were driving men to desperation. But man's extremity is God's opportunity. This little gathering was a symptom of the times. After an hour spent in prayer they drew up an appeal to "all serious and zealous professors of the Gospel of every denomination" to meet in London in the following summer. The result was that in September of the following year (1795) a Missionary Society was formed whose "sole object shall be to spread the Gospel among heathen and other unenlightened nations." Later it adopted the name London Missionary Society.

The Society was undenominational. Many of the founders were Congregational, but others belonged to other Protestant denominations. It was also international. It formed and entered into alliance with similar societies in other lands, and welcomed recruits to its Missionary ranks from Holland, the German states, and elsewhere. Anyone whose heart stirred him up might come, and if found worthy, be sent to the foreign field. Like the British and Foreign Bible Society, which owed its existence to a similar urge, it had a heart too big for small divisions.

## 1. A Mission to the Ama Xosa is undertaken.

It is not clear why a Mission to the tribes lying beyond the Eastern boundary of the Cape was among the first planned. Possibly van der Kemp had something to do with it. He was a Hollander, and Dutch ships often skirted the Kaffrarian coasts, while their frontiersmen were beginning to come into ever closer contact with these warlike tribes.

Van der Kemp was born at Dordrecht in Holland in 1747. He was a qualified doctor of medicine, an authority in mathematics and military science, a botanist of some repute, and was able to read and converse in no less than sixteen European languages. He was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, but not greatly concerned about religion. In 1791, while he was boating on the river at Rotterdam, a squall upset the boat, an accident which, under God, led to his conversion. His wife and child were drowned, and he himself saved with difficulty. He wrote to the Society: "When on the 5th of April I asked the Lord Jesus what He would have me to do, I was led to write to the Society, and now I am hoping that you will be led by Him to discern, and to reveal to me, the will of the Lord." He was not immediately accepted. It was not until the 31st of March 1799 that he arrived in Table Bay. In the meantime he had visited Britain, had added theology to his already imposing list of qualifications, and had been solemnly ordained to the Christian Ministry. He was then fifty-two years of age.

He was the leader of a band of four. The others were John Kicherer, an ordained Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and John Edmonds and William Edwards, two English laymen. In Cape Town the party was divided. Kicherer and Edwards went to the North West on a Mission to the Bushmen, while van der Kemp and Edmonds proceeded towards the Eastern frontier. Later we will tell of the remarkable events that led to this change of plan; for the present we are concerned with the Kaffrarian Mission. The journey to the frontier was long and arduous. We who know the South Africa



of today can scarcely picture the conditions. Roads were mere tracks, and one needed a guide to follow them. Graaff Reinet was a huddle of tiny houses, mostly of wattle and daub, clustered round the Drostdy and Church. Here the party paused to prepare for the adventure beyond the Fish River.

Conditions along the frontier were unsettled. War with Gaika had just ended in a patched-up peace. Edmonds and Bruintjes (a Hottentot guide from Genadendal) were against proceeding, but after six weeks delay the bolder counsels of van der Kemp prevailed. He writes in his journal: "Satan pressed me hard, but the more the difficulties and dangers were mentioned, the more I was excited in my mind to go forward, and found my faith increased. I prayed to experience the same favour which I had once so remarkably experienced in Amsterdam in 1798, and I found my mind easy and at rest in the Lord."

As this was the first attempt made by any Society to establish a Mission among the Ama Xosa we quote somewhat fully from the journal, with its intimate pictures of the people and country.

**Sept. 17.** We passed the Kat River, and five or six lesser streams with much labour and difficulty, being obliged to cut our way through woods and stones. At noon we saw plenty of cattle in the mountains. This was the first mark of habitation we saw since the 8th when we left Krieger's farm. Soon after we heard the barking of dogs, and arrived at a kraal. The people gazed at us, and asked many things.

**Sept. 20.** We arrived at Gaika's cattle kraals, then the place of his residence near the River Chumie, which flows into the Keiskamma. About a hundred Kaffirs flocked together, and we enquired for King Gaika, but nobody answered. After we had waited about ten minutes the king approached in majestic and solemn attitude, advancing slowly, attended on

each side by one of his chief men. He was covered with a long robe of panther's skins, and wore a diadem of copper, and another of beads round his head. He had in his hand an iron kirri, and his cheeks and lips were painted red. He stopped about twenty paces from us, and one of his attendants signified that this was the king.... He reached us his right hand, but spoke never a word. I delivered him a tobacco box, which we had filled with buttons. He accepted it and gave it to one of his attendants. At a distance behind him stood his captains and women in the form of a half moon; and at a great distance the rest of the people. During all this time he moved not an eyelid, nor changed the least feature in his countenance.

The next day by means of a Boer named Conrad Buys, who lived among the Natives, they were able to make closer contact. Many searching questions were asked and answered. When asked if they were the emissaries of any government, they answered in the negative. "Did then this plan spring out of your own heart?" To which the answer was that the plan was from God, who wished only the happiness of all people. Gaika seemed satisfied, and allowed them to remain.

From the first Edmonds had been faint hearted. Fear possessed him. By the end of the year he had had enough. His waggon trailed over the hills, carrying him out of the story, and leaving his elder brother alone.

**Jan. 1, 1800.** To see my brother Edmonds departing was a very trying circumstance. But the Lord supported me.... Before he left we went over the river to a wood, and there we wrestled in prayer once more.... I went up a hill and followed his waggon with my eyes for about half an hour, when it sinking behind the mountains, I saw him no more.

**Feb. 3.** This day my house was finished. Four Hottentot women and a child, and Thomas the deserter, attended our Missionary prayer meeting.

It is significant that this site where the first Mission House was built was near where Fort Hare now stands, the first Native College for higher education. The tiny mustard seed has grown into a sturdy tree.

**April 5.** Mr. Buys and his associates, being informed that the Kaffirs intended to kill us, were in great terror.... I slept that night in the arms of God's love, in peace and safety; while they spent it in great fear and trouble.

**April 25.** Gaika went back, and this morning and afternoon came again with the children. In the evening he told us that we should break up and settle ourselves at Debe.

The new site was about half way between the towns of Alice and King Williamstown. There he remained for nine months. But war with the Colonists again threatened. The Governor was insistent that he should withdraw. Reluctantly, after much prayer and heart searching, he returned to Graaff Reinet on December 31st 1800, cast down, but not unto despair. Thus ended the first attempt to preach the Gospel to a Bantu tribe.

## 2. The Call of the North.

We now return to the first arrival in Table Bay. We can best tell what happened in the words of Kicherer:—

“Just as we arrived at the Cape three deputies from the Bushmen arrived also. These men requested us to come and instruct them. A certain Floris Fischer had some time before gone among them to contract a peace.... This good man did at evening and in the morning bow his knees before God, and also sang Psalms, which made such an impression on this nation that they from that moment neglected not to request that he would take care that they might come to know the God the Dutch prayed to. This he promised, though he was utterly at a loss where to procure a teacher.... See, dear Brethren,

this was to take place previously; and even at that period.... we were induced to come from a far country to comply with their desire. How clearly is the hand of God to be observed in this."

Thus, under a leading which they could not resist, the original plan was altered. Kicherer and Edwards, accompanied by a South African recruit Cornelius Kramer, went with the three "deputies" on their journey to the North. The event created quite a stir. Presents and offers of help came in. It was an imposing cavalcade, consisting of six waggons loaded with provisions, sixty oxen, and near two hundred sheep. On the Zak River they established their first Mission, which they called Happy Prospect Fountain.

The London Directors fully endorsed this unexpected departure, but adhered to their decision that a Mission should have a staff of four. Accordingly a second band of four was sent out, who arrived in Cape Town in September 1800. Two were English, William Anderson and James Read, names destined to become famous in South African Missionary circles; and two were Hollanders, A. A. van der Lingen and Bastian Tromp. Read was appointed to join van der Kemp, and Anderson was assigned to the Bushman Mission.

The story of the Northward advance for the first few years is one of perplexity. The land was drear and the people scattered nomads. It is all but impossible to follow the many attempts, all unsuccessful, to establish a settled Bushman Mission. The great achievement was the discovery of the Griquas, a Dutch-speaking people scattered along the Orange River. Anderson was the leading spirit. As early as March 1801 we find him at a place which he called Rich Fountain, three days march North of the Orange River. This is almost certainly the first white residence North of the River. Five years later he is at Klaarwater, now known as Griqua Town. He writes, August 6th, 1806:—



We have for the past six years denied ourselves many comforts and necessities of life, and applied the money taken up to the things more immediately touching the Mission.... I would not exchange my Mission for any in Africa. We have been enabled to bear a severe strain; our Blessed Redeemer was with us. O that He may keep us humble, faithful and diligent.

The settlement among the Griquas at Klaarwater was in the line of the Society's later advance, leading to Kuruman, the Bechuana and Matabele Missions. Work among the scattered tribes of Bushmen, Griquas and Damaras living along the lower reaches of the Orange River was continued until the arrival of Dr. Philip, when it was discontinued. It had its perils and adventures. Great names are on the records. Here Robert Moffat began his career. He travelled throughout what is now South West Africa, as far as the present town of Windhoek, and was the first white man to report on the country. The story of how he brought Africaner, the freebooter condemned to death, with a price on his head, now a humble Christian, to Cape Town to give himself up for punishment or pardon, is well known. Henry Helm and his wife, accustomed in Germany to many luxuries, were content for Christ's sake to endure hardness. Their station was at Pella near the Orange River where they lived in huts destitute of all but the barest necessities. The brothers Albrecht were worthy men. The one married a Miss Brugman of Cape Town, a lady of gentle upbringing and great spiritual attainments. Inspired by the example of van der Kemp she found in the Mission field the fulfilment of her heart's desire. She lies buried at Warmbath, one of the long line of saintly women who have given all in the service of Africa.

### 3. Van der Kemp hears the call to serve the Hottentot Nation.

When van der Kemp arrived in Graaff Reinet in the beginning of 1801 he found awaiting him two recruits,

James Read and Anthony van der Lingen. There he was given what he would have called "a wink of Providence." He was offered the position of Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church of the village, an offer which was transferred to his younger associate, van der Lingen, and by him accepted. Thus there were three Missionaries in the little village, the one occupying the most influential position in the whole community. They felt called to make this the base for a Mission to the despised nation of the Hottentots. The story is best told in a few quotations from the Journal:—

**June 1, 1801.** (Note the date. Six months have passed. There must have been active propaganda work). At the Missionary prayer meeting which was kept this evening in the Church (i.e. the Dutch Reformed Church), besides the Church members a great number of the Hottentot and other nations were present, who opened this solemnity by singing Psalm 134, which was answered by the Christian congregation singing Psalm 74, verses 4 to 10.

**June 2.** Brother Read began with a reading and writing school for the instruction of the Hottentots.

**June 9.** A number of Colonists with about three hundred waggons left their houses and assembled in Swagers Hoek, murmuring against the instruction of the heathen. We were informed that they intended to come and burn down Graaff Reinet.

**September 7.** Our Hottentot congregation increases gradually in number, knowledge and grace. The number of children in our school is 62. We have resolved to fix a small Missionary establishment here under the charge of one Missionary. The Commissioner gave us for this purpose a piece of ground on the banks of the Sundays River, about 2,660 feet long, and 537 feet broad. This we accepted in the name of the Society.

But the discontent among the farmers came to a head. Graaff Reinet was attacked, houses were burnt, and van der Kemp was fired upon. The ground given for the discontent was not the preaching, but the admission of the heathen into the Christian Church, and more especially, the alleged harbouring of run-a-way slaves and servants. Van der Kemp appealed to the Governor in a letter which marks the beginnings of a new policy with which we shall deal in the next Chapter.

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## CHAPTER II.

## VAN DER KEMP'S MISSIONARY POLICY.

With the settlement at Bethelsdorp in June 1803 a new departure began in Missionary policy. When the Missionaries first arrived, as was natural, they accepted the social system as they found it,—the White overlord, owning all the land, with beyond the borders Native tribes smarting under the constant encroachment on their land, and within the Colony the Coloured people enslaved, and the free Hottentots, landless and with scant protection from the law. All this now came under review. The Missionary outlook was widened. The social uplift of a people was added to the simple preaching of the Gospel.

**The Missionary as Evangelist.** Van der Kemp and his associates and followers were first and foremost Evangelists. They were true to the fundamental principle of the Society which sent them “to spread the knowledge of Christ among the heathen and other unenlightened nations.” They had ample evidence that faithful preaching does change the lives of men. To quote only two examples from the early Missionary records:—

“Brother Cupido first heard at Graaff Reinet that God can change sinners. Going to Bethelsdorp he heard a sermon from van der Kemp, that seemed to be directed solely to him. A new radiance came into his life. He gave up drunkenness and evil practices to give himself to the service of the Gospel. He led many to the obedience of Christ.”

“Brother Boesak was a famous elephant and buffalo hunter. He said he had two hearts; the one heart will do nothing but sing all manner of Hottentot and Bushman songs, and do all that is bad; the other heart tries to sing the praises of Christ. He became a great traveller for Christ. In the beginning of the

year (1809) he took a tour among the farms.... At one place the farmers threatened to kill him, because they said, he tempted their people to run away. No sooner did he hear this than he entered the house.... He attacked his enemies in the name of the Lord, and continued until he gained the victory.... They gave him full liberty to instruct their people. He gained such an influence that afterwards they were afraid to drink a dram in his presence."

It was customary to send the converts out to preach. "In my opinion," said van der Kemp, "they are valiant champions without swords." The rumble of their wag-gons, and the sound of their singing and preaching, were heard throughout the land.

**The Missionary as social reformer.** A new purpose came to be placed alongside the simple preaching. It was social uplift. While living at the kraals of Gaika on the Chumie and at Debe van der Kemp had come to see that the cause of the frequent wars was not only the barbarism of the Natives. An equal cause was the insatiable land hunger of the Colonists. And his experiences at Graaff Reinnet had further opened his eyes to the oppression under which the Hottentots groaned. Their sorrows were burnt into his soul. He knew them capable of good things; under right treatment they would be a useful element in South African society. In a letter to Governor Dundas, dated from Graaff Reinnet on November 11th 1801 he speaks his mind, and outlines a plan. We quote a few paragraphs:—

"We were witnesses to the deplorable and wretched condition into which the Hottentot nation were sunk for want of food, instruction, liberty, useful employments, and a spot which they, under the superintendence of the government, might in some measure call their home."

He says that as a result of oppression many were seeking an asylum among the Kaffirs, whose barbarism

they prefer to the barbarities of the Colonists. He suggests that a suitable piece of ground should be given in the neighbourhood of Fort Frederick, where they can have protection should it be needed, and where they can be formed into a regular society with Missionary supervision under government direction.

"The chief object of the Missionaries should be to promote the knowledge of Christ, and the practice of real piety both by instruction and example.... And in the second place the temporal happiness and prosperity of this society with respect to the country at large.... The actual admission and expulsion from this society shall depend entirely on the judgment of the Missionaries, but it seems necessary that of those who have lived in the families of Colonists none shall be admitted except on written declaration signed by the Landdrost..... As we are of opinion that the rule laid down by Paul, that if any would not work neither should he eat, ought to be strictly observed, our intention is to discourage laziness.... Their occupations shall be either those of agriculture and farming, or the mechanical arts, e.g. soap boiling, candle making, spinning of thread, manufacturing of paper, tanning, potting, brick making, turnery, etc."

The inmates are to be paid for their labour, and any profits will go to the promotion of other similar settlements. Great care will be taken to prevent the Institution becoming an asylum for criminals.

The Governor was sympathetic, especially as it fell in with his plan for using the Hottentots as a buffer against the Kaffirs. Presently a band of half naked Hottentots set out from Graaff Reinet under cover of darkness for their trek across the wilderness to the promised land of Bota's farm. The distance was 190 miles. Many fell away on the journey. When the roll was called on arrival there were 160 present. Here a printing press was set up which published the first spelling book produced on South African soil, containing



3,133 words of one syllable. But the site proved unhealthy, and presently a Kaffir war drove the Colonists back across the Gamtoos River, and the little band were forced to take refuge inside the deserted walls of Fort Frederick. Defeated, but undaunted, van der Kemp held the remnants of his band together, and, when the war was over applied to the new Batavian Government, who granted the site at Bethelsdorp.

Bethelsdorp was unsuited to the high purpose van der Kemp had in view, but he did what he could. Gardens were planted in the kloof behind the station, where there was a scanty supply of water, houses and a school and Church were built, a carpenter's and blacksmith's shop were added, and the people taught such simple crafts as leather work, house building, repairs to waggons, and the growing and preparing of aloes for export. Most of this was begun during van der Kemp's lifetime, and by his direction. Bethelsdorp became the headquarters of all the South African Mission field. When Colonel Collins visited in 1809 he found 639 persons in residence, and a further 340 engaged on surrounding farms.

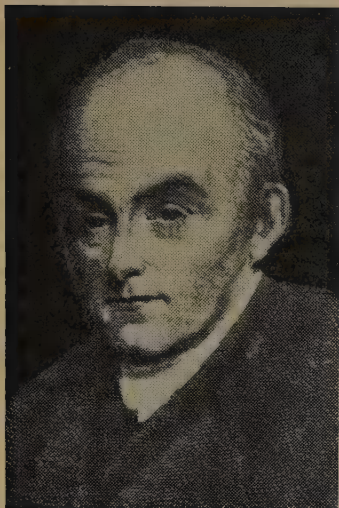
There was much opposition. Cuyler, the Landdrost of Uitenhage was unsympathetic, and many who professed sympathy with a simple Gospel-preaching derided this new-fangled notion of making citizens out of barbarians. Twice van der Kemp was summoned to Cape Town to answer charges against his work. On the first occasion Mrs. Mathilda Smith, a Cape Town lady, undertook the arduous journey to Bethelsdorp to carry on the schools. From the second occasion he was not destined to return. His health was failing. The Society offered to make him their South African Agent, with residence in the greater comfort of Cape Town, but the aged war-horse refused. He would return to Bethelsdorp, or if refused permission, would go to Madagascar or India as the Spirit of God directed. But the leading was elsewhere. On the 15th of December 1811 he was summoned to appear before his Maker. Mathilda Smith, bending low over his bed, asked, "Is it darkness or light?" "Light", was the

whispered answer as he passed on. In his death he was honoured. Many, who in his life had been apathetic, realised that one, who understood the deeper secrets of Africa's needs, had passed from their midst. A contemporary record says:—

“He was followed to the grave by some of the first persons of the Cape, the fiscal, several members of the court of justice, the Ministers of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches, vast numbers of the Cape inhabitants, many pious soldiers of the different regiments; yea, a great part of Cape Town made their appearance on this occasion.”

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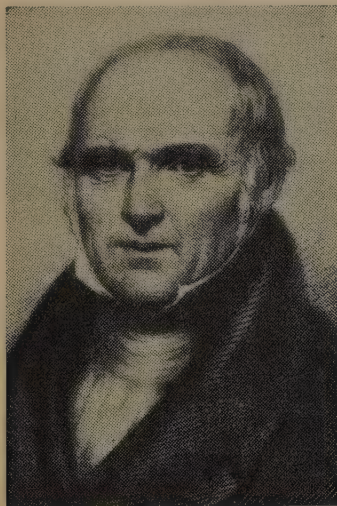
## SOME EARLY LEADERS.



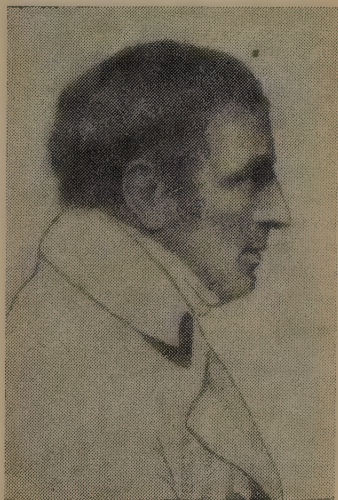
Rev. J. T. VAN DER KEMP,  
M.D.



Rev. JOHN PHILIP, D.D.



Rev. JAMES READ.



Rev. J. KICHERER.



## CHAPTER III.

Dr. JOHN PHILIP MISSIONARY  
SUPERINTENDENT. 1820 to 1850.

The death of van der Kemp deprived the Society of its most trusted agent. His letters had been the main channel through which the Directors received information, and he had died under a cloud of suspicion. It was decided to send a deputation from England. In 1812 the Rev. John Campbell arrived to investigate and report on the Missions as a whole. He was a London Minister, a Director, and a great friend of Missions. He was a short, stocky man. His portrait, evidently drawn in England, shews him in the midst of the African veld, dressed in conventional London garb, the only concession to the African sun being an umbrella. He stayed two years,—in journeyings oft. From Cape Town he went to Bethelsdorp, then North to Griquatown, from there to Lattakoo (Kuruman), where the Chief said "Send me Missionaries, I will be a father to them." From there he went through entirely unknown territory to the Marico, and back to Griquatown. Thence he went again through unknown lands along the Orange River, visiting the stations of the Bushman Mission, and so back to Cape Town. Apart from its Missionary interest his journeys have a place as one of the great adventures of African travel. The part played by our Missionaries in exploration needs greater recognition. We have seen how Moffat was the first to explore what is now the South Western Mandated Territory. Later, in 1829 Moffat visited Mosilikatze on the present site of Pretoria. Again, later he journeyed to Inyati in Matabele land, opening up the great North Road. The fame of Livingstone's contributions to our knowledge of Central Africa has overshadowed these earlier ventures.

The first result of Campbell's reports was the arrival in 1816 of a number of recruits, men of better education than

some of those of an earlier date. Among them were John Kitchingman, John Taylor, Robert Moffat and John Brownlee, all men who have left an abiding mark on South African life. In 1818 Campbell came out again, accompanied by Dr. Philip. Philip's engagement was for five years, "that I might gain a more thorough knowledge of the actual state of the Missions, set them in order, and if possible secure the cordial co-operation of the Colonial Government in their favour." In the event he stayed until his death, thirty-one years later. He was not the first, nor the last, to be captured by the romance of Africa.

**The work as Philip found it.** A study of the L.M.S. Report for 1820 shows the layout of the Missions as Philip found them. The total amount spent on the South African field is given as £3,744 16 4. Against this a sum of between £600 and £700 is received from the Auxiliaries at Cape Town, Stellenbosch, Graaff Reinet and Bethelsdorp. Most of this came from European friends, showing an interest on the part of many Colonists. In Cape Town there are reported to be 7,500 slaves, of whom only 50 are under Christian instruction. Outside Cape Town the stations named are Stellenbosch, Paarl, Tulbagh, Caledon Institute, Pacaltsdorp and Theopolis, all "within the Colony." Beyond the Colonial boundary are Kaffraria "where there is no Missionary at present"; Griquatown under William Anderson and Henry Helm with, as Native agents, B. Barends and P. David; New Lattakoo, where Robert Hamilton has settled with a Native agent, J. Hendrick; Bethesda, Africaner's kraal, where Robert Moffat is at work; Warm Bath and Steinkoff, where J. Kitchingman is at work, and Bethany. Of these stations it may be noticed that within the Colony only three are now on the books of Cusa, Paarl, Pacaltsdorp and Bethelsdorp; while beyond the Colony there is not a single familiar name, though Kaffraria is now the scene of several Missions, and New Lattakoo is known to us as Kuruman.



**Consolidation under Dr. Philip.** One of Philip's first tasks was to put the finances on a sound basis. Hitherto the relationship between the Board and its Missionaries had been that of father and son. The Missionary had no salary, but drew on the Society to meet his needs. Van der Kemp drew nothing from the Board, but supported himself out of a meagre personal income. The Andersons and Helms lived in huts with the barest necessities. A standard amounting to penury was set by such people, while others put their needs at a higher rate. Quite apart from such obvious abuses the system had a bad psychological effect. People who have nothing of their own are in a state of dependence which reacts on character. After much correspondence a scale was fixed,—a single Missionary £75 a year, a married Missionary £100, with £5 a year for each child.

The next task was to so reorganise the placing of the men as to secure the greatest efficiency, and lead to progressive development. The Namaqualand work had no future, and was beyond the capacity of the Society, who had responsibilities nearer home. Kitchingman was brought down to assist James Read at Bethelsdorp, Moffat was shifted to the new work among the Bechuana, the Helms were appointed to the Caledon Institute, and William Anderson came from Griquatown to Pacaltsdorp. When we come to the story of the Churches we will see how effective these changes were.

A study of the accounts for 1848, near the close of Philip's administration, shows the progress made in thirty years. Whereas in 1820 the number of Missionaries on the books was nineteen, it is now thirty-seven. The list of stations has grown to thirty three. Within the Colony nearly all the places where there are now flourishing Coloured Churches connected with Cusa are on the list. This applies also to what is known as the Kaffrarian Mission. King Williamstown, Peelton, Knapps Hope, Fort Beaufort are centres of activity. To the North the work at Kuruman has been consolidated, and in spite of set-backs due to the Boer migration, is stretch-



ing forth its hands through Bechuanaland to the distant Matabele. In addition Philip was responsible for the accounts of the Paris Missionary Society operating in Basutoland. Looking over the work as a whole one is conscious of a wise statemanship, which permitted no difficulty or opposition to halt the advance of Christ's Kingdom.

**Philip's Character.** In some histories of South Africa, and unfortunately in those in use in our schools, Philip is pilloried as arrogant, self-willed, blind to the real situation, and even dishonest and untruthful. Only in recent years have voices been raised in his defence.

There are in South Africa two schools of thought on what is known as the Native question. The one may be called the All-White School. To it South Africa is a White man's country, in which the Black man is an intruder, to be kept in perpetual subordination, permitted to work only at menial tasks in the White man's interests. The other may be called the School of Realism. It recognises the Natives and the Coloureds as fellow citizens (those for whom also Christ died), without whose cordial co-operation South Africa can never attain its destined place in the comity of nations. Philip was a realist. He saw the oppression under which the Coloured population groaned,—some slaves, others free, but actually in a state worse than slavery, without land, denied fair hearing in the courts of law, ignorant and often depraved. He believed them capable of good lives, their degradation being the result of oppression. He was uncompromising in advocacy of their rights, rights which he interpreted in the light of the Gospel of Christ. This was the first item in his offence. He was courageous and persistent. When unable to carry his point in South Africa he appealed to England, which in those days had the last say. This was the second item in his offence. As time went on he gathered about him an ever increasing number of thoughtful men both in England and South Africa, who were able to give effect to his policy, as in the promulgation of Ordinance 50, and after his death secured an

equal franchise for all races under Responsible Government. This was a third item in his offence.

In Cape Town the people he influenced were gathered into a Church of liberal principles, the first of its kind in South Africa. Later a similar Church, owing its inception to his sons and other children of the Missions, was established at Port Elizabeth. Of these we will tell in a later Chapter. The liberalism for which these Churches stood is today found in the Churches of all Denominations, and among people outside all Church organisation. In spite of defeats and setbacks it steadily makes its way. "Realism",—the spirit that faces things according to their inward significance, not according to outward appearance or selfish interests however powerful, is always according to the will of God, who shaped this complex world for our unravelling.

Philip was not always easy to get on with. Strong men seldom are. Some of the Missionaries resented what they felt to be his unwarranted interference. Here is David Livingstone's testimony. Livingstone himself was not an easy man. Writing to a friend from Port Elizabeth in 1841, on his first contact with South African affairs, he says:—

"I would have written sooner, but delayed that I might be able to inform you how I got on with Dr. and Mrs. Philip.... I lived in their home a month. I came to it full of prejudice against them, and I left with my prejudices completely thawed, my fears allayed, and my mind imbued with great respect for the upright Christian character they both exhibited during the whole of that period.... In all our intercourse I could perceive no attempt to usurp authority. There was nothing like a desire to dictate, the very reverse of that spirit was first in all they said or did..... Mr. Birt, whom you know, and all the good Missionaries speak of their conduct towards them with great affection.... Perhaps you know Mr. E. Williams of Hankey, James Read Jr., Kitchingman of Bethelsdorp,

and Robson of this place. There are others whom I have not met, of whom I hear good reports."

In all his labours he was ably seconded by his wife. Mrs. Philip was a grand woman, one of the mothers in Israel, whose influence and strength are the sustenance of the Christian Church. She kept the books of the Society, and also those of the Paris Missionary Society. She organised and conducted a Religious Tract Society, and a Bible Society. A room in her house was set apart for the storage and dispatch of the many volumes that passed through her hands. She was deeply interested in schools, especially a new system of infant schools recently established in England. The system was introduced into the Colony, and under her guidance established in all the Missions. On at least two occasions she accompanied her husband on his extensive tours into the interior. We shall meet her again in our story of the Cape Town Church, when we will speak of her charitable activities.

In 1845 William Philip, their son, who had recently returned from his studies in England to engage in Missionary work, and John Fairbairn, a grandson, were drowned in the Gamtoos River at Hankey. It was a blow from which the aged couple could not recover. Mrs. Philip died in 1847, and Dr. Philip in 1851.

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## CHAPTER IV.

## AFTER FIFTY YEARS.

By the middle of the century the L.M.S. had celebrated its Jubilee. It had been a wonderful fifty years. The South Seas, South Africa, Madagascar, India and China now heard the redeeming call of the Gospel. The tiny seed of faith and purpose sown in the small gathering in London, of which we told in our opening Chapter, had grown into a sturdy tree, whose branches spread to the confines of the earth. We read in history of the hungry forties. The sending Churches were finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their gifts. Year by year there were deficits which were eating up all reserves. A halt must be called, and South Africa seemed the one country where economies might be considered.

**Withdrawal from the Cape Colony proposed.**

In 1848 the Rev. J. J. Freeman was appointed as a deputation to visit the South African stations. Before us as we write is the Letter of Instructions. It is a great letter, deep in its understanding of the world's needs, and of the fine work done by the early Missionaries, whose descendants are no less worthy of helpful sustenance. But there is the urgency of a depleted treasury. "We are constrained to urge upon you in every case the necessity of urging upon the Mission Churches and congregations the duty of making every possible effort towards self-support, and thus leaving the resources of the Society free for the extension of the Gospel in populous regions not hitherto visited by the Messengers of Salvation."

The last sentence gives the case for withdrawal from the Directors' view-point. South Africa was thinly populated, while in India and China and Central Africa (not yet explored) were millions who had yet to hear the appeal of the Cross. Not only were there too many

agents of the Society for the numbers they were called to serve, but they were jostled by the Missionaries of other Societies who had entered the field. Africa, South of the Orange River, was rapidly becoming what a later Missionary Council described as "the most congested field for Missionary endeavour in the world."

### The Churches in 1850.

Freeman spent two years in South Africa (1848 to 1850). His Report gives a multitude of interesting glimpses of the work as he saw it. We have space for a few of the more vivid and interesting. In Cape Town he found Dr. Philip aged and much worn, about to retire from labours beyond his strength. The Society offers him a pension of £200 with the option of living where he will be most happy. There is trouble in Union Church where some are demanding a younger and more energetic man. The Coloured Church in Dorp Street is also in trouble, for Vogelgesang has seceded, taking with him a section of the congregation. At the Paarl Barker is now an old man, quite blind, and much beloved. Zion Church has fine buildings, with outstations throughout the District. Services are held for Europeans, at which the attendances are 200. At Pacaltsdorp the veteran W. Anderson still resides, eighty years of age, "a father in God to many thousands." The work is in the hands of T. Atkinson, "a man of much mildness, and excellent in labour." At George "the Society's laborious Missionary J. Melvill" attends to the needs of the Coloured people, and a European Church, recently formed, has sent a Call to William Elliott, "a man of much experience in the

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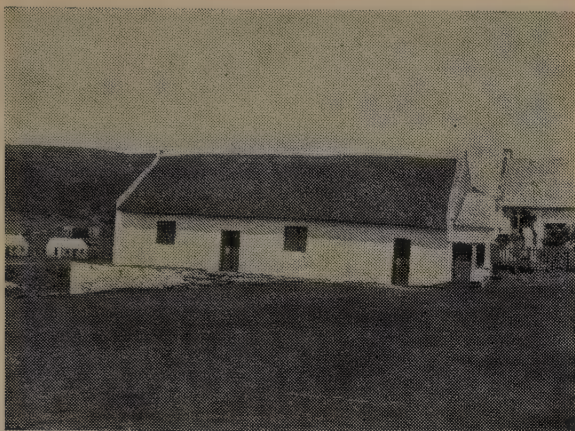
The cost of the South African Missions shewn in the accounts for 1845 to 1848 was:—

|      | Total Cost | Contributed in S. Africa | Nett cost to Soc. |
|------|------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 1845 | £9218      | £2396                    | £6822             |
| 1846 | 6736       | 662                      | 6074              |
| 1847 | 6191       | 1879                     | 6512              |
| 1848 | 9247       | 1600                     | 7647              |

The salary scale was still, as in 1820, £100 with allowances for children and other expenses.



BETHELSDORP  
OLD CHURCH.  
The Mother Church  
of C.U.S.A.



PACALTSDORP  
CHURCH.  
The Mother Church  
of the S.W.D.A.

PEELTON  
CHURCH.  
Known as the  
Cathedral of  
Kaffraria.



of this book. The Griqua Church is in sad disorder "owing to the action of the Government." Kuruman is the centre of the Bechuana Mission, with its energetic thrust towards the Interior. The work is not favoured by the Emigrant Boers, who push them ever towards the waterless deserts of the West.

Freeman returned to London confident that the work might, and should be retained. The saving and civilizing influences of the Gospel were deeply rooted in the lives of the people within the Colony, and were winning an ever-widening field in the regions beyond. Writing from Grahamstown on August 4th 1849 he said: "The Society has been honoured to accomplish a great work in South Africa. I am satisfied that our pecuniary relations will soon be in a much more satisfactory state. Expenses are being curtailed, and resources augmented. I see no institutions that can be given up, at least for the present." The South African Auxiliaries were subscribing £1,500 on the average, and there was promise of still greater liberality.

### **The effect of the Kat River Rebellion.**

Scarcely had Freeman left when the Missions received a shock from which they were to suffer for many years. Along the Eastern frontier the Government had placed in the fertile valleys of the Kat River a buffer state of Hottentot families to assist in the defence of the frontier. There a prosperous community had grown up with Churches and schools, under the care of James Read, assisted by his son, and by a Coloured teacher Arie van Rooyen, whom Freeman ordained. In earlier wars they had done well. Now came the war of 1850 to 51 when some joined the Kaffir tribes in their assault on the White settlements. How many actually rebelled cannot be determined. Read says the Church membership was little affected; van Rooyen that some were dragooned by a Kaffir commando under Hermanus Matroos. But racial passion makes no discrimination. A blaze of anti-Missionary passion swept through South Africa, directed especially



against the L.M.S. Work everywhere became more difficult. With the loss of friends came loss of revenue. Freeman, who died within the year, saw his hopes frustrated. The Directors had to face greater expenditure with a lessened prospect of successful service.

### **Withdrawal is again considered.**

In 1853 a circular was sent to the Missionaries asking for a considered opinion on the policy to be pursued. Moffat and Livingstone were uncompromising in their reply: "We consider that the Colony has ceased to present the spiritual and temporal destitution which are understood to entitle a country to be treated as a Missionary field by our Society." Others, within the Colony, who would be more directly affected, were more hesitant. One economy recommended by Freeman was carried into effect. The office of General Superintendent, so long and honourably held by Philip, was abandoned. William Thompson became the Agent of the Society, to attend to the accounts and keep in such general contact as would be possible by correspondence. Greater responsibility was thrown on the Missions by the organisation of District Committees. In 1855 William Ellis came out as a second deputation to urge upon all concerned the urgency of the issue.

### **The Challenge.**

The L.M.S. did not abandon its Missions as is sometimes stated. It challenged them to stand upon their feet as Independent Churches, and by so freeing the Society, take their share in sending the Gospel to the multitudes yet in darkness. It was an appeal that touched the heart of their pride and their generosity. They did not at once respond. That is characteristic. Africa takes time to consider. The Society assisted their deliberations as they were able. The budget despatches of 1868 urged the creation of a Coloured and Native pastorate to take the place of the Missionaries as they retired. A Commission, consisting of W. Thompson, T. D.

Philip and Edward Solomon was appointed to visit the Institutions to consider the transfer of their secular interests to the people themselves. Their proposals, when put to the people, were accepted by large majorities. Parliament appointed a special Commission with Saul Solomon as Chairman, whose report, a document of 76 pages, was issued in 1873. The Institutions, which from the days of van der Kemp had been havens of rest for a distressed people, were passed into the care of their successors now advanced to the status of free citizens of the state.

The dates at which the Churches accepted the challenge of Independence are:—

- 1855 Dysselsdorp, Oudtshoorn and George.
- 1870 Kruisfontein, Hope Dale (Union Dale) and Ox Kraal (Hackney).
- 1871 Philipton and Grahamstown.
- 1873 Caledon Institute (Zuurbraak).
- 1874 Port Elizabeth.
- 1876 Paarl and Cradock.
- 1878 Pacaltsdorp.
- 1880 Bethelsdorp.
- 1882. Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet.

Hankey, which accepted Independence in 1876, failed in its obligations, and became finally Independent in 1910. All the others, except Zuurbraak, which passed to the care of the Dutch Reformed Church, became Independent Churches, responsible for the maintenance of the Ministry. The L.M.S. like a father launching his children on the world, was free to carry on its beneficent work in other fields.

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## CHAPTER V.

THE EARLY YEARS OF  
INDEPENDENCE.

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It is one thing to accept independence, another to meet its responsibilities adequately and in a Christian spirit. There are not many records available, but we know enough to say that in the early days, in spite of hardships and some disappointments, the first results were satisfactory. The old Missionaries were still in charge, responsible now to the Church Meeting, where formerly they looked to the Society. Atkinson was at Pacaltsdorp, Paterson at Uitenhage, Anderson at Oudts-hoorn, Robson at Port Elizabeth, Kitchingman at Bethelsdorp, Smit at Grahamstown. These were experienced and trusted men, to whom the Churches were accustomed to give allegiance. They had comfortable homes. The old Mission Houses were now the Manses of the Churches. They must look to their Churches for support, but the Society was still behind them, ready if need arose to give help. Their children were still in receipt of education grants, and they were entitled to a Missionary's retiring allowance when their task was done.

Another great help was the presence in all the Churches of bands of Deacons, for the most part elderly men of good character, ready to take their part in preaching and to guide the Church Meeting to wise decisions. Our Churches can never repay the debt they owe such men, whose successors are still with us, not rich nor wise as the world counts riches and wisdom, but sound men, earnest and sincere in prayer, receiving with grateful hearts the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

To what extent the Churches at this stage relied on the help of the Society for financial assistance we have no knowledge. The point could be determined by a study of the books of the Society, but it is of small importance.

The help was small, never regular, or given as a matter of right, just occasional payments to meet special need. Nor are we able to say to what extent the Ministers suffered from arrears of salary. Nor do we know what arrears were quietly written off, and forgotten. In such matters the left hand is not permitted to know what the right hand does. It is all in the name of the Master. The spirit of sacrifice is the life of the Church. A letter from a son of the Minister of Oudtshoorn gives a vivid picture of life in the Manse of a Coloured Church in those days:—

“My father was the first of the Missionaries to trust entirely to his congregation for support. When this was I do not know, but I know that as a result my parents had a struggle to make ends meet. I can remember as a small boy having to be satisfied with very meagre fare. One of my happy recollections is the arrival of a grateful farmer with a pig-skin full of the most delicious honey. For a time we did not have to eat dry bread. The brunt of the burden fell on my mother, and no woman in this wide world could have surpassed her in her efforts to make things go. She had fourteen children, and ran a big house with the help of two little servant girls. She kept a school for about fifteen children, six of whom, farmers’ daughters, she boarded. She taught us all music (piano), ran twelve little houses for poor folk, and was called in for every case of sickness or trouble in the village, both White and Coloured. When a new wagon was imperative for my father’s work, she bought one with the proceeds of clothing made with her own hands. With it all she never shewed annoyance, never made us feel she had no time for us. The people of the Church did their best, but they were deadly poor, and could do no more.”

With all the difficulties these were happy years. The Churches, proud of their status as Independents, rejoiced in the Church Meeting, where they had the one opportunity in their restricted lives of speaking their mind in

debate. A Minister who gave a long life to the service of the Coloured people bore witness that he knew no more fortunate task. Another said that any hardship he had endured was to him and his wife a crown of rejoicing. Congregations filled the Church on Sundays and week evenings. In the Church Meeting a little playful tact could generally smooth over difficulties. The real test would come when these men had to be replaced.

### **The Second Generation of Independence.**

The implications of Independence became evident in the second and later generations. Properties must be cared for. The L.M.S. wisely retained ownership, but the use and care of many valuable buildings now became vested in the people. Some cases of neglect and dilapidation occurred, but on the whole the pride taken in their new status was reflected in the appearance of the Churches, schools and Manses. There was the care of schools. A school committee must be elected, a Manager appointed, school fees collected and accounted for, and equipment maintained; and all to the satisfaction of the Government School-inspector. Then there was the appointment of teachers, which must ultimately imply the training of their own sons and daughters, for no people are truly independent whose children are taught by teachers of another race. Here was a task for CUSA in the years to come. And finally there was the Call to the Ministry. All this rested in the last resort on the Church Meeting. There was no outside authority. To maintain purity of membership and wisdom of administration, were the high tasks to which the Churches were called.

Africans of all nationalities love the thrust and parry of debate. Among the Bantu tribes the tribal meetings of Councillors are occasions for real eloquence. The Councillors state their case, but they take no vote. The Chief, having heard, decides. Among the Coloured people decisions had rested with the Missionary, who spoke with the authority of the Society. Now the Church

Meeting must do more than discuss. It must decide by majority vote. This was a new thing in Africa. At first there was trouble. Parties would be formed, sometimes on family lines, sometimes on no appreciable principle. Meetings would be prolonged into the small hours of the morning, and, when at last sheer weariness imposed the closure, would break up without decision. In a few cases the police were summoned to maintain order, and there were occasions when the decision of the majority was challenged in the civil courts. We will meet these cases in subsequent Chapters. If we are reminded of the condition of the Churches of Greece and Asia Minor to whom St. Paul addressed his Epistles, let us also read with his faith and hope and charity. In all the Churches were those who felt themselves "called to be saints", who tried to conduct their Church life as "stewards of the grace of God." The L.M.S. had done its work well. A seed had been sown, which though it might grow for a time in wildness, was destined to develop into a sturdy tree.

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE EVANGELICAL VOLUNTARY  
UNION.

It is interesting to trace the birthplace of great movements. Sometime in the late fifties, probably in 1858, three Ministers met in the old Mission House at Cradock. They were R. B. Taylor, T. D. Philip, and Edward Solomon. Each had L.M.S. antecedents. Taylor had been a Missionary of the Society in the West Indies, came to South Africa in 1841, and succeeded Munro at Cradock in 1848. His Church was still on the L.M.S. books, but was in large measure self-supporting. Philip was a son of Dr. Philip, was ordained in 1844 after a brilliant career in Edinburgh, was Tutor at Hankey until 1852 when he assumed full charge of the station. Solomon was a Cape Town boy who had been interested in Missions by Philip, and in 1842 was attached to the Griqua Mission at Philippolis. In 1856 he became Minister of the Bedford Free Church. We can picture them in close conversation in the Minister's study. Possibly, listening to the conversation, was a daughter of the house who in the course of years was to become the mother of one of the ablest of the Missionary leaders of a sister Church—the Rev. John du Plessis, Missionary to Nyassaland, General Missionary Secretary of the Dutch Reformed Church, traveller and historian of African Missions, and later professor of theology at Stellenbosch. Such links have their significance. The conversations led to the formation of the Evangelical Voluntary Union, out of which the Congregational Union grew.

It was decided to form an alliance of voluntary Churches. The term "voluntary" needs a word of explanation. Under the Dutch East India Company the Church was a department of the public administration. Ministers were appointed and paid by the Company. When the English took over the Cape this became a part of their



liability. It was quite in accord with the practice in Britain, where Churches both in England and Scotland were established. But in England many of the Churches were "Free", and in Scotland a vigorous campaign for the "Crown rights of Christ" had led to the Great Secession. In South Africa this had its repercussions. Only some of the Churches received grants, most of them Dutch Reformed, but some Anglican, and at least one Presbyterian. Naturally this led to jealousy; but deeper than jealousy lay the growing conviction that the Church should be free from all political shackles. In 1854 Saul Solomon introduced in the Cape Legislature a Bill to abolish all Church grants. He was defeated, but year after year, for twenty-one years, he persisted in his campaign. Saul Solomon's annual Bill might be a joke in the House of Assembly, but it was gradually gathering behind it the awakened conscience of the people. The three confederates agreed that support for the Solomon Bill would be an excellent basis for a new alignment of Churches.

The result of their deliberations was that in the following year (1859) a meeting was held at Grahams-town at which there were present fourteen Ministers and seven laymen. All we know of this meeting is the number present, and the names of two who are bracketed as Chairmen,—the Rev. A. Robson of Port Elizabeth, and the Rev. W. Y. Thompson, Minister of Trinity Church Grahamstown. We cannot even be sure of the date, the two years 1859 and 1860 being bracketed. One other fact has come down to us. They called themselves the "South African Union of Voluntary Churches."

In 1861 we get more positive information. We have the first Year Book. It is a single quarto sheet, headed Evangelical Voluntary Union. The preamble reads:—"At a meeting of the South African Union of Voluntary Churches held at Port Elizabeth on the 27th and 28th of March 1861, the Rev. J. Harsant in the Chair, there were present the Revs. Birt, Edwards, Harsant, Johnston, F. Kayser, H. Kayser, Merrington, Paterson, T. D. Philip

and Robson." Then follows a resumé of the decisions. The name was changed to The Evangelical Voluntary Union of South Africa. It was declared that "The Churches and Pastors forming this Union shall be Evangelical in doctrine and Voluntary in practice, adopting the following principles:—

1. It is the duty of every Christian Church to aid in the support and propagation of the Gospel.
2. The stronger Churches are bound to render pecuniary aid to the weaker.
3. For the above purposes it is desirable that sister Churches should form themselves into Associations.

The objects are declared to be:—"To promote Christian Union and fraternal intercourse among the associated Churches, to aid them in the maintenance of the ordinances of religion, and in obtaining Pastors; to assist in the establishment of new Churches among professing Christians and among the heathen, to help young men in obtaining an education for the Ministry, etc. etc." Then follows the organisation, which is of a most general character. There is to be a "General Committee", consisting of the Ministers and not more than two delegates from each Church, which is to meet at least once in every two years. Anyone who contributes not less than five shillings may become a member of the Union, and take part in meetings on the same terms as the appointed delegates. The Churches are urged to form themselves into local associations. There is to be a standing Committee, consisting of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, who shall transact business when the General Committee is not in session. In all this we can see the germ of our Assembly, District Associations and Executive.

It is clear that the Evangelical Voluntary Union was not regarded as a new Church, nor was it a Union of Churches in our modern sense. Rather was it an alignment of Churches, Ministers and Christian laymen for

the furtherance of Christ's Kingdom. Its model is the L.M.S. which also is not a Church, nor a Union of Churches. It is inter-denominational. At least one Presbyterian Church (Adelaide) joined, and one Presbyterian Minister (Johnston) was on the Committee which drew up the Constitution. It is also clear that a main purpose was to link together the newly established Independent Coloured and Native Churches, and to give them the backing of European fellowship.

The change of name from the Union of Voluntary Churches to the Evangelical Voluntary Union is interesting. The word Voluntary is retained, but is made subordinate to the word Evangelical. There is a whole chapter of South African history here. At this time a violent controversy was raging in the Dutch Reformed Church. Three Ministers were indicted for heresy, were cited before the Synod, and dismissed. They took their case to the Supreme Court, which reinstated them. But the matter did not end there. The Synod appealed to the Privy Council in London, which upheld the finding of the Supreme Court. The controversy raged throughout the sixties, and was discussed in every home in the country. It was an earlier version of the du Plessis case, only, as South Africa had in those days less to talk about, the excitement was proportionately greater. Our fathers did not take sides, but they took steps to make their own case abundantly clear. Many were urging that the only safety for the Ark of God in a changing world was in state establishment: set the Church free, and it would be involved in a riot of heresy. They wished it made clear that as Free Churchmen they believed the safety of the Church lay in the untrammelled guidance of the Holy Spirit; and they wished to declare their fidelity to the Eternal Gospel by which they lived. Thus they retained the word Voluntary and made it subordinate to the word Evangelical.

The men who drew up this historic document were the Revs. R. Birt, Roger Edwards, J. Harsant, J. Johnston, F. Kayser, H. Kayser, J. T. Paterson, T. D. Philip,

## A large group photograph of the 1911-12 football team. The team consists of 22 players and 2 coaches, all dressed in dark suits and ties. They are posed in three rows: the front row is kneeling, the middle row is sitting on a bench, and the back row is standing. They are positioned in front of a large, light-colored building with a prominent chimney on the left side. The ground in front of them appears to be a dirt or grass field.

*Standing:* .....? Mr. J. Mackay, Rev. H. Kayser, Mr. S. Jones, Mr. Granger, Rev. T. J. Paterson  
 Rev. F. Kayser, Rev. F. Kolbe, Rev. W. H. Mann, Mr. J. Kitchingman, Rev. S. P. Elliott, Rev. H. Smit.  
*Seated on Chairs:* Mr. Jack (Editor E.P. Herald), Rev. R. Birt, Rev. R. Taylor, Rev. F. Edwards, Rev. J. Read,  
 Rev. T. D. Philip, Rev. E. Solomon (with book), Rev. A. Robson, Rev. J. Harsant, Rev. M. B. Philip (on stool),  
 Rev. R. Johnson, Rev. van Rooyen, Rev. T. S. Merrington.  
*Seated on ground:* Delegates, not recognised.

*Seated on ground:* Delegates, not recognised.



and A. Robson. The meeting appointed Septimus Jones, a member of New Church, Port Elizabeth, as first treasurer of the Union.

The Union was divided into three branches or Committees, the Eastern Branch with its centre at Port Elizabeth, the Western Branch centred at Cape Town, and the Kaffrarian Branch for the Churches about King Williamstown. Of the two last we know little. The Western Branch maintained the Voluntary principle in its most refined essence, for we hear of a rebuke addressed to Zion Church at the Paarl for accepting a school grant; but it is allowed liberty of conscience. Also we have a note that for fifteen years no meeting was held. The Kaffrarian Branch certainly functioned, for we read of matters referred to them. The Midland, or Eastern Branch, met regularly year by year until it was merged in the Congregational Union.

In 1873, the earliest information we have, there were twenty-one Churches associated with the Eastern Branch. Of these five were European,—New Church (Port Elizabeth), Trinity (Grahamstown), Queenstown, Bedford and Adelaide. Ten were Coloured—Bethelsdorp, Cradock, Graaff Reinet, Union Chapel (Grahamstown), Hankey, Kruisfontein, Philipton, Union Church (Port Elizabeth), Queenstown, Tidmanton and Uitenhage. Two were Native—Knapps Hope and Edwards Memorial (Port Elizabeth). Two were mixed, Coloured and Native, Adelaide and Bedford. The total membership is given as 292 European, 2,788 Coloured, and 390 Native, though the Native returns are incomplete.

During the seventeen years of its existence eleven annual meetings were held at Grahamstown, and six at Port Elizabeth. Considering the small numbers, the slowness of communications, and the poverty of the people, the results achieved were remarkable.

### **Church and Missionary Extension.**

When the Diamond Fields were opened at New Rush (Kimberley) steps were taken to begin work. Services



for Europeans were begun by visiting Ministers, and a Church organised. George Bottomley seems to have been the moving spirit. He was a merchant, a man of Christian character, and of much energy. A daughter became well known in Congregational circles in later years, as Lady Mackintosh, wife of Sir William Mackintosh M.L.A. of Port Elizabeth. A promising start was made among the Native and Coloured people employed on the diggings. The agents were Rev. Gwaai Tymzashe, the first Native Minister to be ordained, and J. Poot. Two Churches resulted, at New Rush and du Toitspan, which in 1875 reported a membership of 172, with a usual attendance of 420, and with two Outstations. Church work was also organised in the Alexandria District with William Oates in charge, who ministered to Europeans, Coloureds and Natives. In 1875 a membership of 175 was reported. An Evangelist was engaged to work in the Winterberg District with two centres at Jansenville and Darlington. In Uitenhage plans were made for the opening of a European Church, which materialised in 1881.

### **The Training of Ministers.**

The shortage of Ministers was a grave handicap, threatening the very life of the Churches. Sometime in the fifties the Rev. B. E. Anderson of Oudtshoorn and Charles Searle of Great Brak River, while in London, persuaded a number of young men of the Harley Institute to volunteer for the relief of South Africa. Among these were Thomas Gamble, James Ramage, George Anderson and J. Newton. All these did yeoman service, especially in the South West. In 1868 the L.M.S. Budget Dispatches urged the training of a Native and Coloured pastorate. The Union established an education fund to give help when and where it might be needed. The number of young men who offered for training was remarkable,—N. Goezaar, G. Tymzashe, J. F. Philip, J. van Rooyen, T. S. van Rooyen, M. E. Smit, J. Oates, H. P. Ferreira, H. Bezuidenhout, J. P. F. Read, and William



Oates. Of these J. F. Philip, M. E. Smit, J. Oates, H. P. Ferreira and J. P. F. Read studied in England; the two van Rooyens were at Lovedale, and N. Goezaar after completing his Lovedale course, was at the instance of the Union, admitted to the Theological classes at Stellenbosch, where he completed the studies prescribed for Ministers of the Dutch Reformed Church.

### **In General.**

A review written in 1878 states that the Union had helped to start or to maintain work at King Williamstown, Queenstown, Kokstad, Kruisfontein, Hackney, Kimberley, du Toitspan and Alexandria. All this was done on an income which varied from £50 to £350 a year. Also the Union gave the needed impulse for the erection of Edwards Memorial Church for Natives at Port Elizabeth which cost £2,400.

The annual meetings were devotional and instructive. The practice of opening each session with a time for prayer, and of appointing a Minister to preach an official sermon, was instituted early. Time was given for the reading of papers. Some titles give an indication of their character. The History of Bethelsdorp by Kitchingman, the History of Hankey by Philip, the History of Uitenhage by Paterson, Mission Life in the Interior by Roger Edwards, The Union and its Claims, Vineyard Work, The Training of Native Ministers, The Power of Christianity to modify National Character, etc.

In looking through the small booklets which did duty as Year Books, and were published in both English and Dutch, we can understand the feeling which prompted the words of the Executive in 1877, "The Union which for the sake of the brethren composing it whom we have known, as well as for the work which it has done, we have learned to love."

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## CHAPTER VII.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CONGREGATIONAL UNION.

From the Formation of the Union in 1877 to the  
Adherence of Cape Town in 1883.

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In 1875 Saul Solomon succeeded in getting his Voluntary Bill through Parliament. The need for a Union of Churches "Voluntary in Practice" had passed. Henceforth all Churches would be free, inasmuch as no more fresh Government grants would be allowed. Denominational distinctions were hardening throughout the country. The Anglican and Wesleyan Churches were becoming established in most centres, the Baptists were forming their Union, and though twenty years were to pass before the Presbyterian Church of South Africa would come into being, there were several isolated Presbyterian Churches, and the nucleus of organisation in the Presbytery of Kaffraria. It was evident that an interdenominational alignment of Churches was no longer practicable. The idea of a Congregational Union was not new. In 1858 a special meeting of the Church and Congregation of Union Church, Cape Town, directed that a circular letter should be addressed to all Congregationalists in which the following statement occurs: "That this meeting is unanimously of opinion that a Union of the Congregational Churches of the Colony for mutual counsel and assistance is highly desirable, and likely to be attended with beneficial results."

**The Evangelical Voluntary Union becomes the Congregational Union.**

The earlier Union had become so predominantly Congregational in leadership and practice that the change of name made but little difference. "The Basis of Union"

adopted is for the most part a transcript, the chief change being in the first clause:—"The Union recognises the right of every individual Church to administer its own internal affairs, free from external control; and shall not in any case assume legislative authority." This clause which gave endless trouble while it was in operation, and has now happily passed into the limbo of forgotten things, was placed in the forefront for a variety of reasons. It took the place of the old word "Voluntary", and it was of the very essence of Independency. It met the fears of the newly-fledged Coloured Churches who were jealous of their new-found freedom, and also the case of other Coloured Churches which were still under the authority of the L.M.S., not having as yet declared for Independence. Then there were a number of European Churches, such as Bedford and Queenstown, which were "union Churches", whose allegiance was desired.

### **The First Assembly.**

The members present at this first meeting of CUSA were few when compared with the attendances of today. The Chairman, Edward Solomon of Bedford, was 59 years of age, a man of remarkable administrative powers. T. D. Philip, 58 years of age, with all the Philip zeal for Missions, was Secretary. J. C. Mackintosh, who had recently settled at Port Elizabeth, was about 30 years of age, a solid, dependable man. These three were chief in leadership. Other Ministers were Nicholas Goezaar, who had succeeded Robson at Union Church, Port Elizabeth; Henry Kayser, about 40 years of age, a man of untiring energy; T. S. Merrington of Bethelsdorp, nearing the close of a long Ministry; William Oates, the youngest present, a capable, earnest man, one of the world's noble army of plodders; J. T. Paterson, 63 years of age, under whose ministry Rose Lane had reached out hands of help to the Coloured people throughout wide districts; W. B. Philip, sharing his brother's Missionary enthusiasm, 48 years of age; James Read of Kat River, a son of Africa in every sense.

Of the lay members we know but little. Septimus Jones and John Mackay were merchants of Port Elizabeth. Jones became Treasurer, an office later held by Mackay. Mackay had been a store-keeper at Hankey, where he became deeply interested in the Coloured people, an interest he in after years turned to good account as member of Parliament. H. Ferreira and James van Rooyen we know, for they are candidates for the Ministry. The others present were Isaac Brown from New Church, Port Elizabeth, Mei Fortuin and Plaatje Davids from Uitenhage, Jan Umkondwana and Frederick Braas from Alexandria, Christian Davids and Christian Siefeld from Union Church, Mentor Philander from Hankey, Mentor Malagas and Gedult Malagas from Kruisfontein, Simon Balla and Matipa Mashiana from Edwards Memorial, Christian van Vuuren and Pekeur van Vuuren from Nanaga, and Piet Spielman from Bethelsdorp. These all were Deacons, men trusted by their brethren. The total attendance was ten Ministers and thirteen delegates.

### **The Enrolled Churches are all from the Eastern Province.**

The number of Churches enlisted was small, and all with the exception of Kokstad, were within a week's journey by Cape cart from Port Elizabeth. They were Adelaide, Bethelsdorp, Cradock, Katberg, Graaff Reinet, Grahamstown (Union Church), Hackney, Hankey, Kimberley, King Williamstown, Knapps Hope, Kokstad, Kruisfontein, Philipton, Port Elizabeth (New Church, Union Church and Edwards Memorial), Queenstown, Tidmanton and Uitenhage (Rose Lane). Of these four were European. Adelaide, being Presbyterian will soon withdraw; and Bedford and Queenstown, as Union Churches, are not quite sure of their allegiance. Fourteen of the Churches are Coloured, and six Native. For the first five years these, with the addition of Somerset East, which joined in 1881, were the Union.

The statistics published in the Year Book for 1877 shew their resources. Of the European Churches New

Church is the strongest with a membership of 100, an attendance of 190, an income of £593, and a benevolent and Missionary fund of £167. At Bedford there are 69 members, an attendance of 140, an income of £425, and benevolence and Missions receive £96. Queenstown has 53 members, an attendance of 140, an income of £425, and subscribes to benevolence and Missions the fine total of £321.

Among the Coloured Churches the membership at Bethelsdorp has fallen to 64, but there are 400 people on the station, the attendance at services is 140, and there are four Sunday Schools. They are evidently generous for their income is £140, and they give £24 to Missions and benevolence. At Graaff Reinet the two Churches, Coloured and Basuto, have a combined membership of 241, with an attendance of 650. Their income is £305, with an addition of £40 for Missions and benevolence. They have four Sunday Schools with 200 scholars and eleven teachers. At Grahamstown there are 376 members, and the attendance is 800. The income is stated with careful precision as £360.1.4½. The Missionary and benevolent fund is £13.6.7½. Philipton still enjoys much of its early prosperity for there are 611 members, an attendance of 450, an income of £450 and benevolence and Missions receive £34. Tidmanton with 357 members, has an attendance of 400, an income of £250, and gives for Missions and benevolence £140. These two Kat River Churches have between them seven Sunday Schools with sixteen teachers and 337 scholars. Uitenhage (Rose Lane) returns 300 members, an average attendance of 500, an income of £340 with £10 for Missions and benevolence. Union Church at Port Elizabeth has 223 members, an attendance of 500, an income of £316, and gives £68 for Missions and benevolence. All these are old L.M.S. Stations, now launched upon the pilgrimage of independence.

Unfortunately the figures for the Native Churches are too incomplete to quote. We know from other sources

that excellent work was in progress at Peelton, Hackney, King Williamstown, Knapps Hope and Edwards Memorial.

### Achievements.

The first task was to seek for a larger fellowship. Invitations were sent to all Congregational Churches, and to all persons of Congregational antecedents known to be in Africa. The first response was disappointing. Natal and Cape Town, while giving the venture their blessing, felt that distance precluded active participation. Similar answers came from the Churches of the South West. But the new venture was not to die of inanition. Bravely it tackled its work, held its annual meetings, appointed its committees, made the first tentative efforts to fulfil its Divine commission as Father in God in succession to the L.M.S.

During these years the annual income remained between £300 and £400. The only subscription, other than those of the associated Churches, was from Cape Town, £20 year by year. There was no help from overseas. It is wonderful what can be done without money when the heart is right. A presentable little Year Book was published in both English and Dutch. Grants were made to maintain the work started by the Evangelical Voluntary Union at Kimberley, the Katberg and Alexandria. A few small grants were given in aid of Churches already established, but the demand on this score was not what it has since become. An interesting vote in 1879 is that of £100 for a European Church to be started in any approved locality, shewing how dire was the need for European backing. This led to the opening of the Church at Uitenhage under the Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys in 1881.

The chief interest of these early years was in the supply of Ministers. This became more and more urgent as the older men, who had known service with the L.M.S. passed on. There was no separate Education Committee as at present. The whole Union were the Education Committee. We have seen how the Evangelical Volun-

tary Union was concerned with the same need. In 1877 J. F. Philip, son of T. D. Philip, M. E. Smit, son of the esteemed Minister of Grahamstown, and John Oates were studying in England. Philip, as a son of an L.M.S. man, required no grant, but the other two received help, which was subsequently refunded when they did not return to South Africa. Timothy and James van Rooyen were supported at Lovedale from an elementary stage to their ordination. Other students appointed and helped were Ferreira, who went to Bristol Institute, and S. P. Sihlali and S. Sihunu, who were supported at Lovedale. Another recruit was J. Pritchard, who came out in 1882 to do fine work at Edwards Memorial, and as Secretary of the Union. He was a student at Bristol, where he heard of Africa's needs from his friend Ferreira.

Proposals were made to the Baptist Union to unite in forming a Union common to both. Delegates were appointed by the two Unions who attended the Annual Meetings for a few years, but the proposal went no further, and was tacitly dropped. A more successful venture was the proposal to hold the Annual Meetings in distant places, such as Cape Town, Durban, King Williamstown. If they would not come to the Union, then the Union might go to them. For a time the proposal hung fire; the difficulties and expense of travel were obstacles. But in 1883 the venture of a meeting in Cape Town was faced.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE UNION IN ADOLESCENCE.

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**From the Cape Town Assembly of 1883 to the Union with Natal in 1900.**

When the Union met in Cape Town in 1883 it was scarcely out of swaddling clothes. The official record says it was the twenty-fourth annual meeting, but that included its period of incubation as the Evangelical Voluntary Union. The adventure of so long a journey was no small thing. There were no railways, and the land journey was long and expensive. The sea route was open, but the steamers were not the comfortable vessels we now know, and there was always the land journey to the port for inland residents. High winds delayed the mail boat, which arrived in Table Bay on the Sunday morning, two days late, bringing the preacher for the year, the Rev. Edward Solomon, barely in time to appear in the Caledon Square pulpit for the evening service. We can picture the scene, the crowded Church (there were crowded Churches in those days), an expectancy in every heart to hear the Minister whose brothers held so high a place in the civil and religious life of the city. Was not Saul the editor of Cape Town's most influential paper, and its member for the Cape Parliament, and Henry the beloved leader of Church life in Caledon Square and Sea Point? And there was eagerness to hear the import of this new thing, a Union of all Congregational Churches. We can think of the preacher, a bit battered after his ordeal, facing the congregation with his accustomed courage.

The delegates were T. D. Philip on his way back from England with most important dispatches in his portfolio; his younger brother Wilberforce from the far off border town of Queenstown; James Read, grown old in his labours for the Coloured people of the Kat River; William

# The Congregational Assembly, Cape Town, 1883.



*Standing:* Rev. H. Kayser, Rev. S. J. Helm, Mr. D. Mudie, Rev. B. E. Anderson, Rev. R. J. Jarvis, Mr. H. Beard,  
Mr. J. Ackland, Rev. W. B. Philip, Rev. T. D. Philip, Rev. J. Pritchard, Rev. W. Dower.  
*Seated:* Rev. E. Solomon, Rev. W. Thompson, Rev. J. Hoyle, Rev. J. C. Mackintosh, Rev. James Read, Jun.

### **The College Scheme.**

The great interest of the Meetings was the launching of the College Scheme. We have referred to the dispatches T. D. Philip brought with him from London. From the earliest days the L.M.S. men had been urging upon the Society the duty of giving substantial help for the training of a Ministry in South Africa to take the place of recruits from England, who could no longer be expected. There was a note of urgency in their letters. Now the need was to be met. An endowment of £2,500 had been made available, together with annual grants for a term of years. Dr. Stewart of Lovedale was in attendance by invitation, to outline the advantages his Institution could offer for such a joint scheme. In an Appendix we give further details. Here it is enough to say that the scheme was launched, with T. D. Philip as Congregational Tutor. Provision for future vacancies, so it was believed, had been made.

### **Rules for the Calling and Settlement of Ministers.**

Hitherto there had been no provision for the guidance of Churches seeking a Minister; each did the best it could, with some disastrous results, such as at the Paarl. The following resolution was adopted:—

“This Union recommends the Churches connected with it, in the event of a vacancy occurring by death or otherwise, to place itself at once under the direction of the Executive, who will thereupon take steps, in concert with the office bearers, for the temporary supply of the pulpit, and for permanently filling the vacancy.”

This was the beginning of the excellent arrangements we now have by which vacancies are at once reported to the District Association, who arrange for the Moderator to take charge and guide the Church under Executive authority to a satisfactory settlement.

## Missions.

Missions were not forgotten. During the past year the Rev. Gwaai Tymzashe had, with the concurrence of the Union, toured the Northern Transvaal, and more recently J. Poote had visited the same district. The result was the beginning of our Mission at Mamabolas, near Pietersburg. Tembuland also received attention, and, nearer home, reports were received of the work at Barrack Street, for which a vote of £25 was passed.

The brethren returned to their homes conscious of good work done. This was reflected in the Year Book of 1884. It became a booklet of quite respectable proportions, bound in paper (earlier editions had been mere pamphlets), with the printed report of the Executive, and lists of Churches and Ministers, foreshadowing the book as we now know it. Finances rose by one hundred per cent, to £606 in 1884.

## The Supply of Ministers.

A disappointment of the next ten years was the small number of candidates offering for training at Lovedale. No better Tutor than Philip could have been found, and the facilities at Lovedale were excellent. But though the trickle of students was small, there was one great accession. In 1885 J. C. Weis went to Lovedale. His contribution to the well-being of our Churches through the years of his ministry is one of the high lights. The pity is that more of his quality did not come forward. But though the College scheme did not accomplish what was expected, three men came from Lovedale, trained before Philip's arrival, S. P. Sihlali, who went to the Transkei, S. Sihunu who did good work at Uitenhage, and W. B. Rubusana, who for many years, as Minister at East London, was the stalwart champion of Native rights. Other notable accessions came from overseas. In 1885 Thomas Gamble was ordained at Heidelberg. 1889 saw Charles Phillips at Graaff Reinet. New arrivals in 1891 were F. J. Ecclestone for Johannesburg, William Arthur for Kruisfontein, W. H. Richards for Kimberley and later



Sea Point, and John Mackenzie, appointed by the L.M.S. to Hankey in a last attempt to save the wreckage of the old station. In 1892 G. P. Ferguson was at Uitenhage, Dewdney Drew at Johannesburg, and Mark Wilson at Peulton. 1894 welcomed J. G. Layton at Bedford, Alfred Olver at Worcester, T. G. Galley at Oudtshoorn, and (for a brief Ministry) Arthur Hallack at Sea Point. In 1896 there were further accessions, Walter Friend at Port Elizabeth, M. Richardson and H. C. W. Newell at Johannesburg, L. J. Thacker at Peulton, Arthur Giles in Rhodesia and W. J. Dower at Queenstown. In 1900 J. Martin Dower began a fine Ministry at Grahamstown. Thus by the end of the century the deficiencies in the Ministerial ranks were to some extent made good. In this the C.M.S. had been helpful, both in selecting men and giving them financial assistance. This Society was coming to take the place left vacant by the retirement of the L.M.S.

The need for recruits is seen when we look at the debit side of the Ministerial lists. In 1884 Edward Solomon, T. J. Paterson and F. G. Kayser retired from the active list. In the same year B. J. Helm died at Heidelberg. These were mighty men, stalwarts of an earlier time. In 1888 the Coloured Churches suffered a severe loss in the death of H. M. P. Ferreira at the early age of 43. In 1892 the Kaffrarian Churches lost the services of R. Birt, a veteran of the old school. In 1894 James Read died at Philipton, undaunted in spite of many years in the forefront of service. 1900 recorded the death of no less than eight Ministers. When the names were read in the first Assembly held at Durban, there was a hush as though the brethren heard the far off sound of many trumpets. Samuel Sihunu was a young man, T. G. Jones had been a recent acquisition. G. Y. Jeffreys had seen much service in Natal and the Cape Midlands, and had been the first regular Secretary of the Union. The others were old L.M.S. men, T. J. Paterson, F. W. Kolbe, Henry Kayser, T. D. Philip and B. E. Anderson. With them passed the final link with the early days.

### A Period of Expansion.

There was considerable advance in the number and standing of the Churches. In Cape Town Caledon Square disappeared, but not until it had given birth to stalwart daughters at Sea Point, Observatory, Rondebosch and Kloof Street. Barrack Street ceased to be a Mission, and in its place came a Coloured Church at Harrington Street, and a new Native Church at N'Dabeni (now Langa). At the Paarl Zion Church left us, but the fine Church of Bethel rose in its place. The European Church came at the close of the period. The Worcester Churches, both Coloured and European were additions. Upington, with Keimoes and Kenhardt, were admitted. In the South West Willowmore was a new Church, and each of the old Coloured Churches grew by the establishment of new Outstations and branch Churches. At Port Elizabeth New Church gave place to Pearson Street, and North End was constituted a separate Church. The fifteen years ministry of Walter Friend will be remembered with affection. Union Church, under William Dower, expanded until, with its sister Church of Bethesda, it gathered within its folds most of the Coloured people of the growing city. The Native people were well served by H. C. W. Newell at Edwards Memorial. At Uitenhage the European Church prospered under Ferguson, and Rose Lane under Gamble, with its sister Church at Dale Street, provided for most of the Coloured people of the town and a wide district beyond. At Graaff Reinet there was a new Church for Europeans, and the work for the Coloured people was well maintained by a succession of Ministers. At Grahamstown Trinity Church was still with us, and the Coloured work was in the capable hands of S. J. Helm. Bedford Free Church continued to subscribe to our funds. Queenstown European was still with us, and during the period entertained the Assembly twice. A new European Church at Burghersdorp was flourishing. The Native work of the Border was in good order at King Williamstown and Peulton. A flourishing school

for Native girls at Peelton was a feature. Vryburg was a young Church serving a growing European community. Throughout the old Cape Colony the Churches were maintaining their place, and the accessions were steadily adding to their strength.

Nor was the Cape Colony all. Progress in Natal was satisfying. That will be narrated in another place; Natal was still under a separate Union. The Transvaal began to figure in the picture. In 1899, largely through the influence of Natal, the Church we now know as Bree Street was started. Other Churches for the growing European population were begun at Rossettenville, Turfontein, Braamfontein, Ophirton and Bellevue. Owing largely to the unsettlement of the South African war much of this pioneer work proved unsuccessful. The big development was the progress of Ebenezer Church under Charles Phillips. As the Rand grew so the Church expanded, overcoming all obstacles and becoming the dominant Church for Coloured people throughout the length of the Reef. A Native Church was started with its centre in Doran Street. In Rhodesia work was begun in Bulawayo, which was later established on a sure footing at Gwelo and Que Que.

### **The Spirit of the Assemblies.**

The growing strength of the Churches found expression in a new spirit in the Assemblies, to use the name that was now taking the place of "The Meetings." There was a growing sense of power, a feeling that, in keeping with the spirit of the L.M.S., Congregationalism had a contribution to make to the well-being of South Africa. Liberty, equality, fair play for all according to the teachings of Jesus Christ, and in the spirit of His Cross, were the dominant watch-words. A quotation from John Mackenzie's Chairman's address, given at Queenstown in 1898 may be taken as summing up the spirit of the times:—



"In this Colony we are, thank God, free citizens of a free country; but we delight to think that, like the great Apostle Paul, we are the bond-servants of Jesus Christ. In other capacities we may be politicians, or members of Chambers of Commerce or Farmers' Associations, or we may be struggling but contented country people, knowing little of public life; but here, in this Assembly, the most retiring in nature or by upbringing feels that he must come forward, when elected to take his share in the public service of his Saviour..... As Christians we know of no half-way houses where we may rest and be thankful. We point steadfastly to the goal placed before mankind by our divine Teacher and Leader; we proclaim His principles, His maxims, His Gospel. Others may call these principles visionary, but we cannot pay so poor a compliment to our heavenly Guide as to admit that He came to the world to teach mankind what was not practical."

### The Magazine.

The growing importance of the work demanded some public expression. It was resolved at the Grahamstown Assembly in 1895 to publish a Magazine which might be the voice of the Union for all South Africa. J. C. Harris undertook the editorship. The first issue lies before us as we write,—a neat little volume of some forty pages, well illustrated, and bound in an orange coloured wrapper with an artistic design shewing the continent of Africa with Europe and little Britain on the far horizon—a symbol of our new South African outlook. The forty pages include as an inset the "Congregational Magazine", the official organ of the C.M.S. The twelve pages printed in Cape Town have two illustrations, a general view of the city of Grahamstown where the Assembly was held, and a full page portrait of Chief Justice de Villiers, who had recently laid the foundation stone of the new Church at Sea Point.

As the century drew to a close a growing sense of solidarity in life and interest became manifest. The Uitenhage Assembly of 1898 was memorable. A revision of the Constitution tacitly dropped the provision that the Union would on no occasion assume legislative functions. In its place appeared an appeal to all Churches to adopt the Model Trust Deed, giving the Union a place in the Trust under which their properties were held, and requiring all vacant Churches so vested to seek the guidance of the Executive in the appointment of a Minister. Independency was giving place to a sense of family responsibility. It was felt that a whole-time Secretary was needed, who in addition to office work, would visit the Churches to foster the growing sense of comradeship. The Rev. J. P. Ritchie resigned his pastorate at Queens-town to undertake the new office.

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## CHAPTER IX.

## THE GROWTH OF THE FAMILY.

From the Union with Natal in 1900.

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For South Africa the century opened amid the tumults of war. The Assembly of 1899 was held at Graaff Reinet with sadly diminished numbers. Yet small and disturbed as it was, it took two steps of major importance. Charles Phillips in his Chairman's address proposed that a capital sum of £7,000 should be raised to mark the turn of the century. It was an innovation. Hitherto the Union had lived on its annual income, with no invested funds to give stability to finance. Some believed such investments wrong in principle, a denial of that faith which relies on the bounty of God, Who gives manna for each day's need. The Century Fund realised only a tenth part of the sum anticipated, but it indicated a course which in later years was followed with much advantage. The other innovation was the launching of a plan for District Associations. To this we will return presently.

The first effect of the war was unsettlement. With the exception of Rollin at Braamfontein, all the congregations and Ministers of the Transvaal were dispersed. We shall hear of their adventures when we come to the Story of the Churches. At Ladysmith, Kimberley, Vryburg and Burghersdorp Ministers carried on as best they could, giving service to such of their congregations as they could reach, and ministering to the comfort of civilian and military alike. In districts outside the immediate scene of hostilities the Churches carried on much as usual, but with a heightened sense of their calling as Apostles of goodwill. In the early stages the multitude of refugees placed a heavy burden on Churches at the coast. Later, when martial law restrictions became severe, work in country districts was much curtailed.

On the whole our people did well such things as Churches can do in times of strain. There was a sense of urgency, the expectation of a new day about to dawn, a call to face with resolution the tasks the turmoil of the time was thrusting upon the quiet of humdrum South African life.

### **The Union with Natal.**

The most notable event of the war period was the Union of the Unions. The relations between the Natal and Cape Unions had always been cordial. There had been an exchange of delegates, and tentative proposals for closer relationship, but distance, coupled with the fear on the part of some of the Cape Churches that the Coloured interests might be submerged, had kept the Unions apart. In 1900 an invitation by the Durban Churches to hold the Cape Union Assembly in their city as guests in a friend's house was accepted. Twenty-three Ministers and fifteen delegates journeyed from the Cape, and in Durban were joined by eighteen Ministers and twenty delegates, making a gathering of seventy-six. It was a combined Assembly. There were two Chairmen, J. Cottingham of Durban and Walter Friend of Port Elizabeth. The main purpose was to discover a way towards union. Walter Friend, in one of the most impressive addresses ever heard from the chair, showed the way. They wanted union, not uniformity; each component part must retain its identity, while making its contribution to the common stock. The key-stone to the arch of the bridge by which they might cross to the fellowship they sought would be District Associations. To quote a paragraph: "There is much to be done. We need a Secretary, set free to devote himself entirely to the work; an Executive, so organised that it can be moved to a fresh centre every few years, carrying with it the inspiration of the central outlook; District Associations which will magnify their opportunities; a closer association with the Home Churches through the C.M.S. and in other ways."

There was much hesitation about the acceptance of District Associations. Some were afraid they might disintegrate the Union. It was urged in reply that local interest and responsibility must lead from a parochial to a national outlook. It was at first proposed to make the Associations quite small, some nine or ten in all, each with not more than half a dozen Churches. This was overruled, and the organisation which we now have of five Associations was accepted. The Associations did not all materialise at once. Some years had to pass before the idea took root. But the principle, first proposed at Graaff Reinet, was accepted at Durban, and became the bridge over which we passed to a national Union of all the Congregational Churches of South Africa. The little group, which in 1877 had seen the vision, was now grown to a nation-wide family. Spontaneously the whole Assembly rose to sing the Doxology. The Magazine, reporting, says:—"The Spirit of God was manifestly present. The solemn awe of great outlook, the hush of a profound impression of enlarged responsibility, the earnest expectation of fuller privileges of spiritual service, the holy joy of answered prayer, made the atmosphere a veritable Mount of Transfiguration."

### **A Period of Expansion.**

The following year the Executive was removed to Cape Town. It was its first migration. From the forming of the Evangelical Voluntary Union in 1859, Port Elizabeth had been the nerve centre. J. P. Ritchie became the first full-time Secretary, with an allowance from the C.M.S. of £100 a year for the expense of travelling. Polhemus Lyon became Union Treasurer, a Cape Town man with much of the far-seeing enthusiasm of his American birth. Throughout English-speaking South Africa there was the buoyancy of great anticipations. The war was drawing to its inevitable conclusion, which would, it was believed, bring an influx of English settlers. Also, there was much money, for the immense expenditure of army operations

brought prosperity to farmer and townsman alike. New Churches for Europeans were begun at Rondebosch, Paarl, Bulawayo, Pretoria and East London, and the European Churches at Zeerust and Underberg were admitted. For the Coloured people there was a new Church at Wynberg, and Upington, Keimoes and Kenhardt, French Hoek and Pretoria were admitted. Barrack Street Mission became Harrington Street Church. Native interests also advanced. The fine work initiated by the Keck family in the Free State came into the Union. At Solomon's Vale in the Transkei a fine stone Church was built with funds collected by S. P. Sihlali in England. Edwards Memorial at Port Elizabeth was removed to Korsten, following the exodus of the people. In Natal there was a like advance. In Durban Smith Street Church gave place to Aliwal Street, and in Maritzburg the Loop Street Church came to take the place of the old building in Long Market Street.

The Uitenhage Assembly of 1905 may be taken as the peak year in this period of advance. There was a record attendance, forty seven Ministers, and fifty seven delegates. The Executive's Report says:—"Never in the history of the Union has there been a more encouraging outlook, never a more buoyant expectancy in the heart of its representative Assembly." Plans were made for further advance. The "Forward Movement Fund" was launched, which aimed at a capital fund of £15,000 to be used entirely for European Church extension. It was felt that the unequal balance between the number of European and Coloured Churches demanded such concentration. But here the Assembly seemed in direct conflict with its fundamental principle. CUSA knows no colour distinction. Like the old Cape legislature, so largely dominated by early Missionary teaching, it can make no distinction based on colour, not even in the interests of the Coloured people themselves. So it was urged, and the Coloured Churches came to the rescue. By a self-denying ordinance they agreed to make no demand on the new fund, on condition that it should be

in name Denominational, with no mention of race or colour. So it was launched. Delegates from Port Elizabeth and Durban each promised to urge their Churches to become responsible for £2,000. Alexander Francis undertook to give a year of free service in visiting the Churches to secure their interest.

### **The Assembly in a period of stress.**

The next Assembly (1906) was held at Grahamstown under the shadow of financial depression. The prosperity following the war had been short lived. Churches were hard hit. Wealthy members, who had given liberally for causes dear to them, were unable to continue subscriptions. The Union's income dropped, leaving a debt on the year's expenditure of £275. Commitments for many hundreds of pounds for building ventures were found embarrassing to both local and denominational funds. There was no Secretary and no Treasurer. The services of a paid Secretary could not be retained, and the Treasurer, Polhemus Lyon, had left Cape Town for New York. The Executive was brought back to Port Elizabeth, G. P. Ferguson became voluntary Secretary, and D. M. Whyte undertook the difficult task of Treasurer. Grants were cut to the bone, a hardship which the aided Churches, to their credit, accepted with willing surrender. The ship was in danger, and all rallied to weather the storm. The Executive's report for the following year (1907) shows how valiantly the crisis had been met:—"The need of the hour revealed a spirit of devotion. Ministers and laymen stepped forward to offer voluntary services..... Brave souls in the midst of financial perplexity returned to the enthusiasm of earlier days. Churches, which had been unable to exist without aid, resolved to do their best. Instead of a deficit, old debts had been wiped out, all claims had been met, and the year ended with a balance in hand..... Faith had triumphed. We do not indicate the fact with surprise. We witness that this is the history of all great and gracious experience."



## Church Union.

Queenstown 1907, with Thomas Searle in the Chair, may be regarded as an heroic occasion in the Story of CUSA. The Chairman had at his own expense brought all the Ministers and delegates from the South Western Churches, a practice he continued until his death. His address from the chair was a trumpet call to service, especially in the cause of temperance.

The Union was feeling its insufficiency for the task imposed upon it as heir to the L.M.S. in the service of Africa's millions. It is significant that the Magazine report stresses the note of Immanuel, God with us. An overture from the Presbyterian Assembly invited CUSA to join with them, and with other Churches in an endeavour to find a way by which all might be united in service. The stress of the times, and the magnitude of the tasks which all were realising as never before, called for a fresh alignment of forces. With some hesitation, but with a feeling in many hearts, that here was a road of advance opened by God, the Assembly appointed delegates to the first Church Union conference which met at Johannesburg in the following year. Negotiations have been continued year by year, with some exceptions, ever since. A third of a century has passed, hope deferred has at times made the heart sick, but the vision of a United Church strong in the power of the Lord, to accomplish His purposes for Africa, has never faded from the eye of faith.

## The Jubilee Celebrations at Johannesburg.

In 1909 the Assembly for the first time crossed the Vaal. Sixty Ministers and delegates, of whom a dozen were Native, made the journey. The city rose splendidly to welcome the occasion,—not our Churches only, but the city. Large space was given in the press, one leading daily coming out with a front page leader on the meaning of Congregationalism in the life of the nation. It was fifty years since the founding of the Evangelical Voluntary Union, our foster mother. A great gathering met

in Bree Street, Lord Methuen in the chair, with as speakers Sir David Hunter, J. Smith Moffat, W. Pedr Williams, and W. B. Rubusana. It was resolved to launch a Jubilee Crusade to provide a fund for Church extension, and to foster the closer fellowship of the Churches. Visitors were appointed to carry to the Churches the inspiration of the Assembly. It was felt that the appeal for money should be subordinate; yet money was badly needed. The depression had not lifted. The income from the Churches was less than £600.

### **Difficult Years are God's Opportunity.**

During the difficult years following the Boer War South Africa began to be conscious of itself as a young nation having a special relationship to the great continent which is its hinterland. In 1910 the four Provinces were welded into the Union of South Africa. The spiritual side of such political union was reflected in the Assemblies. In 1908 the Magazine says:—"Never before, perhaps, in the memory of the oldest Congregationalist in our midst, was there so manifest in our meetings the presence and uplift of that gracious Spirit Who accepts and consecrates the service of men." George Walker wrote: "Whatever be the perils and weaknesses of South African Congregationalism there is no doubt about its brotherliness." D. M. Whyte wrote as treasurer:—"Clearly the Union's capacity for business grows with experience. One is no longer half afraid to enter lest some wrangle over a minor point may produce discord.... The family feeling is growing, the feeling of mutual affection, confidence and sympathy." A carefully prepared manifesto issued by the Western District Association, and circulated among the Churches in 1910 was a clarion call:—"We feel the need for more unity, co-operation and fellowship among the congregations, and a deepening among all members of a true devotion to the Church, and of a more intense and personal spiritual life, springing from deep conviction of spiritual realities, taught by the Christian faith."

The stress was severe. Lack of funds was a sad handicap. £400 available for grants did not come near to meeting the growing need of existing Churches, and left no margin for extension. The visits planned by the Jubilee Crusade could not be financed. Yet the Assemblies remained in good heart. It is recorded that in Durban in 1910 instead of closing with a scramble, all members intent on catching their train, a special session was held for praise and prayer, and the Minutes were formally signed, the Assembly standing.

### **The Tiger Kloof Assembly.**

The year 1911 may be taken as the turn of the tide. The Assembly held in Cape Town was one of the smallest ever held. There were causes for discouragement. Grahamstown and Queenstown, two Churches which had entertained the Union, and had been a strength to all our enterprises, had transferred their allegiance to the Presbyterian Church, and Kokstad now followed suit. Nor was this all. Following the collapse of ventures at Bulawayo and Pretoria, our Church at East London was closed. Our European arm, always our weakest member, which we had sought with much sacrifice to strengthen, was weakened. Nevertheless it was a great Assembly. It met under the inspiration of two anniversaries, the Jubilee of the Baptism of Chief Khama, and the seventy fifth anniversary of the work of the American Board in Natal. The Assembly was reminded that in all its successes and disappointments, the Missionary call was dominant. Our future must grow out of our past. This was voiced in the address from the Chair by Alexander Pitt. Next year the Assembly met at Tiger Kloof.

Will those who were present ever forget the Tiger Kloof Assembly! The warmth both of the weather and the welcome, the sense of living contact with the forces that have shaped, and must continue to shape, the destinies of Africa, the feeling that we of all people were by the irrevocable forces of history related to these

forces, and a part of them,—all these gave an impetus and meaning to the meetings. The papers read shew the direction of the Assembly's thought. We have room only for the titles: "Our Policy as a Church, Missionary and Pioneer" by G. P. Ferguson; "The Relation of the White and Black Races in the Civilization of the World" by W. C. Willoughby, "Present Day Difficulties in the Mission Field" by S. P. Sihlali, "Our Policy as a Church Missionary Power" by Charles Phillips, "The Missionary Extension Work that a busy Pastor ought to undertake" by T. Downham. From this time CUSA's definite commitment to a Missionary policy, with its corollary of care for the Coloured and Native Churches, passed to the rank and file of the Churches, to gather with the years an ever increasing proportion of the members.

### **The Work continues amid the strain of war.**

In 1914 no Assembly was held. The fires of world war were flaming across the world. In South Africa rebellion swept many districts. In 1915 the meetings were at Johannesburg, E. T. Anderson in the Chair. The Magazine says: "It was a serious Assembly. The presence of the great Head of the Church was manifestly experienced. There was a yielding spirit, a feeling of thoughtfulness for others, an intense desire to know and do the will of God." W. H. Richards voiced the same impression: "The Assembly of 1915 reached high water mark, and was unusually encouraging and helpful. The meetings were characterised by a deep spiritual tone, by a spirit of earnestness and brotherhood, which were truly remarkable. Our great need is unity, sympathy, brotherliness, love of the brethren, to be of one mind." A visitor, whose name is not given, wrote: "It was a surprise to find white, coloured and native brethren meeting in kindly unity, unmarred by racial prejudice or animosity,—a splendid testimony to the work of the early Missionaries." This spirit of dedication was CUSA's contribution, and CUSA's gain from the great war. Two of our Ministers, H. C. W. Newell and B. Kondlo, served as

Chaplains to the Native labour contingent; and two, Isaac Wauchope, an ex-Minister serving with the labour battalion, and J. G. Aldridge, serving with the Y.M.C.A., gave their lives.

### The Closing of the Ranks.

At the Cape Town Assembly of 1911 Alexander Pitt spoke from the Chair of the urgent necessity of giving to the Assembly some authority in guiding the life of the Churches. He urged that the Assembly, meeting under the inspiration of Christ's presence, was led to pass resolutions which the Churches were free to ignore. This could not be according to the will of Him, Whose body the Churches are, and Who expects all to march with even step. At times disputes between members, or between the Church and the Executive, are taken to the civil courts for adjustment, a procedure quite contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. When vacancies occur in the pastorate, there is no authority by which guidance can be assured. He put forward a series of "Draft Proposals", the import of which was to give to Assembly resolutions the force of law.

All were agreed on the need for reform, but all were equally agreed on the need for caution. In Africa changes must proceed slowly. We are a conservative people, accustomed to the pace of the ox. Year by year the "Draft Proposals" were discussed, and decision postponed. In 1915 the preamble, "Believing that the time has come to give the Congregational Union of South Africa some control over individual Churches in the interests of the Denomination", was put to the test of the ballot, fifty-five voting in favour, and seventeen against. The proposals were then accepted in principle, with the exception of those relating to Ministerial settlements, which were held over. During the next twelve years much water was to flow under the bridge. Angus gave a year to the promotion of his scheme of a reorganised Congregationalism; Ferguson toured the Churches

for six years as Union Representative, to bring to them the spirit of the Assembly; Stanley launched the New Era advance. In 1926 an influential commission, representative of all sections, met in Johannesburg, which after much prayer and discussion, gave birth to the Constitution as we now know it. It says much for the wisdom and patience of our leaders that the new powers vested in the Assembly, the Executive and the District Associations were accepted by all the Churches, and have continued in smooth operation ever since. We now have an organised Church life, with rules governing the vesting of properties, the settlement of Ministers, and the adjudication of disputes. The Executive and the District Associations have grown in prestige, and the Assembly has continued to grow in spiritual influence and authority. Perhaps nothing has contributed more to this happy result than the work of Moderators, whose brotherly counsels are welcomed throughout the denomination.

### **Provision for Ministers and their Dependents.**

A first duty of an organised Church is to seek means by which the distresses of its Ministers may be relieved. Under Independency local salaries can be arranged, and paid, but provision for old age and for widows and orphans is, except in the case of the wealthier Churches, all but impossible. Of course the L.M.S. had its provident funds, which provided for the needs of its Missionaries after their Churches had become independent. But new Ministers called to the work were entirely without such provision.

In 1903 Sir David Hunter, in his address from the Chair, urged the acceptance of the principle of denominational responsibility for the necessities of Ministers. He offered on behalf of Aliwal Street an endowment of £1,000, to become available as soon as a like sum was subscribed from other sources. An old-age pensions scheme resulted, to which a few Ministers and Churches subscribed. Twelve years passed. In 1915 it was reported that, the condition having been fulfilled, Aliwal

Street's contribution had been paid into the fund. At that date there were sixteen subscribing members.

Today CUSA has two funds to which all Ministers and Churches are expected to subscribe:—

- (1) The Superannuation Fund, which provides a retiring allowance for subscribing Ministers at the age of sixty five.
- (2) The Widows' and Orphans' Fund, which gives annuities to widows and the minor children of subscribing Ministers.

A third fund is entirely voluntary. The Brotherly Help Fund gives help in cases of emergency, such as accident or illness. To this many Churches contribute a portion of the Communion collections.

### **The Federation of the Women's Associations.**

A sign of the rising tide of fellowship in the Churches was the formation in 1917 of the Women's Federation. There have always been women's meetings in our Churches, some for prayer and praise, others for mutual help, others to organise charity, or to help in raising Church funds. Now these meetings, with all their wealth of meaning for spiritual and material advancement, were to be organised. Miss Emilie Solomon read a paper setting forth the advantages and shewing the way. From that day the Women's Federation has grown in power. At first confined to the European Churches, it now has its branches among our Coloured and Native friends. The annual Federation meetings are held in association with the Assembly, the presence of the women adding much to the family feeling.

### **The Forward Movement and the New Era.**

In an earlier paragraph we have seen how the experiment of a full-time Secretary failed for want of funds. From the retirement of J. P. Ritchie in 1906 to



the appointment of W. Angus in 1917 the Union was served by a succession of voluntary Secretaries, of whom George Walker will be best remembered. As the work grew, the inadequacy of such service became more and more apparent. In 1917 W. Angus was appointed for one year "To set the office in order", and to tour the Churches in the interests of a forward movement. Two years later G. H. Dunn announced that a sum of £10,000 was in hand from which the new advance, called the Forward Movement, could be financed. G. P. Ferguson was given a three years commission—subsequently increased to six—to tour the Churches as Union Representative in the interests of closer fellowship. The Executive was removed to Johannesburg with J. F. Goring, and then Crawford Stanley, as part-time Secretary. In 1926 the New Era Fund was launched, with its goal a capital Fund of £50,000. The Churches rose to the appeal with fine enthusiasm, but found the venture beyond their capacity. With the help of two fortunate legacies £18,000 was reached. This period 1907 to 1926—is the watershed between the old Independency and the present day family life. As G. H. Dunn expressed it in his Chairman's address in 1921: "The work of our Union Representative has been of great spiritual benefit to the Churches, and there are many signs of a deeper interest in the affairs of the Union.... We began our corporate life as a mere string of beads, hung upon the slenderest thread, every bead independent of every other. Gradually by a dual process the thread is becoming a rope, and the beads are being welded into a golden band. In unity of purpose, in charity and in co-operation for ordered service, we grow from year to year.... We have only one purpose, the consolidation of our Churches for mutual helpfulness, that we may take our rightful place among the forces making for the Kingdom of God on earth."

## Inspiration from Abroad.

In 1927 the Assembly met at Durban in high spirits, with W. M. Fernie in the Chair. There were two notable Deputations present. It was not the first time the Assembly had been honoured by such visits. Burford Hooke and A. G. Sleep of the C.M.S. had been with us, and twice we have been privileged to welcome the Secretary of the L.M.S.—Nelson Bitton in 1924 and A. M. Chirgwin in 1930. But this was a special occasion. Miss Kathleen Evans came to bring the greetings of the L.M.S. and Miss Kathleen Denham those of the C.M.S. Miss Evans spent some months touring the Churches, bringing everywhere the fragrance of a consecrated life. Miss Denham impressed all by the glow of her enthusiasm for all that concerns the Kingdom of God. The Chairman was a son of one of the most esteemed of the early Natal Ministers, whose gracious personality both inspired and guided the deliberations. One who had had experience of many Assemblies wrote,—“The spirit animating all made us wonder if the best wine had not been kept for the last.”

Miss Denham presently returned to South Africa as Mrs. Martin Dower, wife of the beloved Minister of Pretoria. When R. J. Johnson relinquished the Secretaryship after ten years of leadership he was succeeded by Martin Dower, the Executive moving from Johannesburg to Durban. There Mr. and Mrs. Dower served for a term of years, happy in the affection and loyal co-operation of the members of the Executive and of all the Churches. Mr. Dower's death dissolved a partnership which had been the inspiration of the whole denomination. He was succeeded by Vernon E. Miller, a son of the South African Manse, whose consecrated ability is proving itself an added strength to us all.

We bring this account of the adventures of our beloved CUSA to a close by a brief estimate of the position as we now find it. We can best sum up the spirit which now animates our gatherings by quotations from recent



Congregational Union of South Africa — Annual Assembly, Port Elizabeth, 1937.

[It was over this Assembly that Miss Emilie J. Solomon presided].



numbers of the Congregationalist. R.J.C., recently arrived from England in 1920, writes: "I have rarely attended any series of meetings in which there was manifested a more delightful Christian atmosphere..... What pleased me immensely was the attendance and tone of the morning devotions." A.K. a Native Minister says: "There is no doubt that all went away with a new vision of the Church of Christ, and a firm conviction that we had reached a decisive transition of Church history in South Africa." C.W.H. a Coloured Minister, says: "Of all the Assemblies I have attended this one was the most impressive. From the commencement the influence of God's spirit was experienced. The Lord moved among us." In 1935 D.K.C. a new arrival says: "Warmth. Perhaps that is the best word with which to characterise the Assembly. Warmth of cordiality, warmth of fellowship, warmth of opinion sometimes, and warmth of weather. But in the midst of warmth, and in spite of it, everybody was most businesslike."

In 1937 the Assembly met at Port Elizabeth with Miss Emilie Solomon in the Chair. This was the first occasion within the British Commonwealth that a woman had presided as the head of a major denomination. Right worthily did she fulfil her post. Her election was a further expression of that liberal spirit that inspires our family of Churches. In Christ there is no difference. In the lesser affairs of life men and women differ, and racial distinctions may prevail, but on the heights as in the depths, we are all one in Christ Jesus.

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## PART II.

# I. THE CHURCHES OF THE WESTERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

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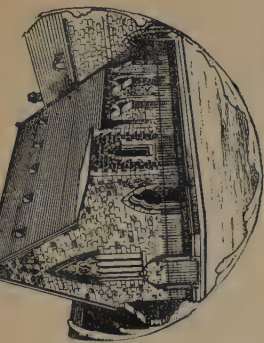
## (1). Cape Town.

The Cape Town which Van der Kemp and his associates saw when they landed on the wooden jetty at the foot of Adderley Street in 1799 was very different to the stately city of today. Before them was a cluster of flat-roofed, white-washed houses where the merchants lived and did business. Stoeps lined the streets where the leisured gathered to drink coffee, and beyond was the cool shade of the Company's garden, with its fine avenue of oaks. The old fort stood apart, the seat of administration, where the red-coats and English speech had but lately displaced the blue uniforms and Dutch of the Company's rule. On the slopes of Signal Hill were the quarters of the poor, and towards Table Mountain were farms and the homes of the richer merchants. Sea Point and Green Point were small hamlets, and behind the mountain, from Mowbray to Constantia, were farms and villages. The city had eighteen thousand inhabitants, of whom seven thousand were White, seven thousand slaves, and four thousand free persons of colour. There were two Churches, the Dutch Reformed and the Lutheran. Services for the English were held by the military Chaplain at the fort. For slaves and Coloured were such crumbs of spiritual comfort as fell from the bounty of the generous.

The coming of the Missionaries was like the dropping of a stone in a quiet pool. The English occupation had not been unwelcome, for it was a protection from Napoleonic invasion, and the new administration had brought some relief from the many burdensome restrictions of Company rule. Here was an added benefit, for the Dutch were a pious people holding that the heathen also had souls needing the Gospel. Two of the Missionaries were Hollanders of standing. Kicherer was an



Union Chapel and Mission House, Church Square,  
Cape Town.



Caledon Square, Cape Town.



Round Church, Sea Point, Cape Town.



Sea Point Congregational Church, Cape Town.



ordained Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and van der Kemp was an ex-army officer and a man of culture. They were welcomed in Christian homes, and soon an Auxiliary of their Society was formed, known as the South African Society for the Spread of Christ's Kingdom. In London the Directors were greatly cheered. The Report for 1801 says:— "The spark of Missionary zeal which was wafted from this country to the Cape of Good Hope appears to have been kindled into a flame in the bosoms of our Christian friends at that station..... The Missionary Society inaugurated in 1800 has no less than 1,800 heathen under its instruction....." The Report for 1802 continues in the same happy strain:— "The South African Society has obtained the liberty of erecting a large building at the Cape for the public prayer meetings, and for the accommodation of the heathen..... The Rev. Mr. Vos at Rodesand (Tulbagh) has desired that two additional Missionaries should be sent out, who are to be entirely maintained by his community."

When after a few weeks the Missionaries left for the far off frontiers of Kaffirland and the North West they were cheered by the thought that in Cape Town and throughout the West they had a base where goodwill and the prayers of many would second their lonely efforts. The storms, which would follow this first stirring of stagnant waters, were yet to come.

The recruits who arrived in 1800 included James Read, whose instructions were to proceed at once to join van der Kemp in Kaffirland. This the Governor would not allow until the threatened disturbances on the frontier had subsided. Read being English, and unordained, and with no social standing, the doors which had opened so freely to van der Kemp and Kicherer were closed to him. He gave himself to the service of the garrison. He was a vigorous preacher, and of great organising power. Soon a Society known as the Calvinistic Society came into being, whose members were pledged to help one another in the Christian life. Read did not remain long in Cape Town,

but the Society he had helped to form continued. When twelve years later John Campbell and George Thom arrived it was still holding its regular meetings. Thom, who was on his way to India, consented to remain to be their leader, to work among the soldiers and to itinerate in the neighbouring districts. On the 6th of May, 1813, the members of the Calvinistic Society, after prayer, gave each the other the right hand of fellowship, and were constituted into a Church of Christ. Others joined, and on the first Sunday of May the first Free Church Communion was held on South African soil. The number of Communicants was ninety. It was an open Communion, but the majority were Scotch Presbyterians of the 93rd regiment.

The little community were not destined to remain long together. Early in the following year the regiment was transferred to India. Before they embarked they met in solemn assembly to be duly constituted a Church of the regiment, with a membership of 157. Thus did the Tavern of the Southern Seas provide spiritual sustenance for those who journey in deep waters. The little Church left behind was now reduced to 27 members, of whom all but three were soldiers. But others joined, some being persons of colour, and the work went on. When in 1818 Thom left to become Minister of the Dutch Church at Caledon the membership was 31, of whom 22 were in the army. They drew up a deed, which was engrossed in the minutes, in which they declared the doctrine of the Church to be that of the Westminster Confession; they undertook to maintain strict discipline, to meet regularly for prayer and exhortation by their elected Elders, to abstain from frivolous conduct, such as attending theatres and dancing, and to engage among themselves in spiritual conversation. So, pastorless, with such help as might be available from passing Missionaries, they held on for the next two years, until the arrival of Dr. Philip in 1820.



### Union Chapel. (E.)

Dr. Philip appears to have taken the Christian people of Cape Town by storm. Congregations were so large that the small loft where the Calvinist Society were meeting proved too small. A move was made to the Orphan Chamber, which was hired at a rental of six dollars a month. When Philip left for the interior, congregations dropped to 35, but on his return he resumed Sunday services with congregations of upwards of 100. On April 3rd, 1820, he was formally called to the pastorate. With some hesitation, with the stipulation that the first claim on his time should be his Missionary duties, and that the Church should be governed by the Church meeting, he consented. Thus the first definitely Congregational Church came into being.

At first the services were continued in the Orphan Chamber, but not for long. As early as 1819 subscriptions were called for for a building fund, and in 1821 the Church was in being, situated in Church Square, overlooking the Groote Kerk of the Dutch Reformed Church. Alongside it was the Mission House, where the Philips had their home. Here for a third of a century, from 1821 until the removal to Caledon Square in 1859, was the dynamic centre of South African Congregationalism. Miss Emilie Solomon, whose mother lived there before her marriage, in her Chairman's address, gives a vivid picture of the early times:—

“To this centre members of the Church came from all parts of the town, and from the suburbs as the town expanded. Great waggons with their long teams of oxen and native drivers drew up at the door of the Mission House bringing Missionaries and their families from the interior, come down on furlough, or taking new Missionaries on their long trek to their stations in the interior. There were constant arrivals by waggon and ship, and one can picture the excitement when the East Indiamen came sailing into the Bay to land their passengers after a three months

voyage from England. Shy German maidens sent out by the Moravian Society as brides to their Missionaries met their future husbands for the first time in the Mission House. Moffat, Edwards, Livingstone, Hughes and other well known Missionaries rested there."

Philip's ministry stands in the front rank of the influences which have gone to shape our national life. He preached the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man. He tolerated no oppression based on colour distinction. His influence reached far beyond the limits of his congregation. The liberalism in social relations which so honourably distinguished the old Cape Colony was largely his creation. But his ministry was not always happy. While some regarded him with an ever increasing admiration, others thought him intolerant and dictatorial. Church meetings were not always harmonious. In 1841, having served the needs of an ever expanding Mission and an ever growing Church for twenty-one years, he began to feel that his failing powers were no longer equal to the double burden. Some temporary relief was found, and in 1844 he finally retired.

He was followed by the Rev. J. Crumbie Brown, a member of a famous family known as the Browns of Haddington. Brown served the Church for nine years. Then in 1853 came the Rev. William Thompson, a man in the true line of the Missionary fathers. He had been a Missionary in India before he came to the Cape. Throughout his ministry the ringing challenge of the wide fields whitening unto harvest was the theme of his appeals. He was the agent of the Society in succession to Philip, but without the latter's more intimate responsibilities. His son, Wardlaw Thompson, became one of the great Missionary Statemen who have served the L.M.S. One of his Deacons, Mr. Henry Solomon, has left an impression of his character:—

"He was a Christian gentleman, courteous to everyone, whatever his condition in life. He followed closely the teaching of "Our Old Bible", of which he wrote

much, and which he constantly defended. He was a sturdy Nonconformist."

During his ministry the Church outgrew the accommodation of Union Chapel, and in 1859 removed to more commodious premises in Caledon Square. At that time there was every reason to think that the district would be residential. It was near the Castle, which had been for over a century the social centre of the city, and many substantial residences had been built along the main thoroughfare leading to the Southern suburbs. For many years it remained an influential congregation, the spiritual centre of South African Congregationalism. Every Sunday morning streams of carriages drove in from the suburbs, later to be displaced by the suburban trains. Its Missionary interest was remarkable. No Church fellowship in South Africa has had a finer record.

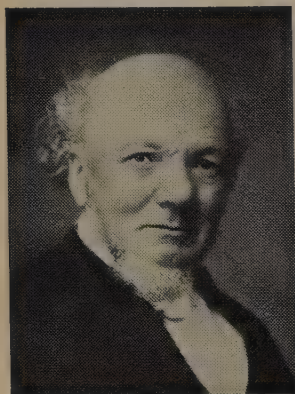
When Thompson retired he was followed in 1882 by the Rev. James Hoyle, and in 1884 by the Rev. W. B. Philip. Both these hopeful ministries were terminated by early death. Hoyle was killed in a carriage accident after less than two years, and Philip died in England after four years' ministry. Then came the ministry of the Rev. William Forbes, a keen thinker and an inspiring leader. His fame spread throughout the country. His sermons published in the Cape Town papers were widely read. Members of Parliament, and other visitors from up-country considered a trip to Cape Town incomplete without a visit to the Church. After fifteen years his health, never robust, necessitated his retirement. Several short ministries followed, but the great days of Caledon Square were ending. The drift of the population was leaving it a down-town Church. In 1907 the membership was dispersed and the property sold.

### **Claremont. (E.)**

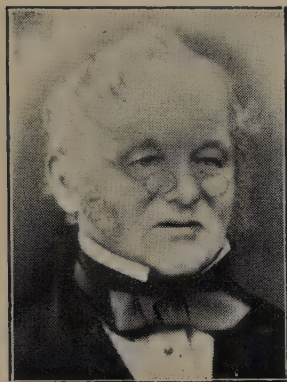
During Philip's ministry the need was felt for some centre in the suburbs where the members of Union

Church could meet on Sunday evenings, and on wet Sundays when it was not possible to undertake the journey to the city. In 1840 Mr. T. J. Mathew built on his own grounds a small chapel where he, with others helping him, gathered the faithful for prayer. Soon the increase of population made this provision inadequate. In 1848 Messrs. R. H. and H. M. Arderne, and Mr. Henry Beard at their own expense built a Chapel of larger dimensions on a site at the foot of the Ardernes' Gardens, now the Claremont Municipal Park. Here the little congregation continued to meet as occasion necessitated,—always giving their first allegiance to the central Church. Gradually, as time went on, the ties with Union Church weakened. A new generation was coming, whose loyalty was to the Church in its midst. In 1882 the Rev. R. J. Jarvis became the first Minister, but ill health necessitated his removal to an up-country Church. Then came the Rev. J. W. Blore from 1887 to 1890, whose varied culture and gentle spirit won the esteem and affection of many. On his retirement, after a brief interval, the Rev. A. Vine Hall began a ministry which continued for over twenty years. Within two years of Hall's settlement the need for larger accommodation became evident. In October, 1892, the Rev. James Cameron D.D. laid the foundation stone of the present enlarged building. Here the congregation continued in happy fellowship, ever maintaining that interest in Missions and in the wider concerns of the Denomination, which had been the heritage of all the Cape Town Churches from the days of Philip. Hall was succeeded in 1913 by the Rev. William Angus, who after seven years gave place to the Rev. Alun Roberts. Roberts' fine spirit soon won the hearts of all, but failing health led to his retirement after two years. The Rev. J. Shepherd followed in 1922, and then the Rev. J. Goring for a few brief months in 1925. In 1927 the Rev. J. H. Atkinson began a fine Ministry, which was brought to a close after eight years by ill health. In 1935 came the Rev. D. K. Clinton, under whom the early Missionary interests of the Church are well maintained.

# SOME LEADERS OF CHURCH LIFE IN CAPE TOWN.



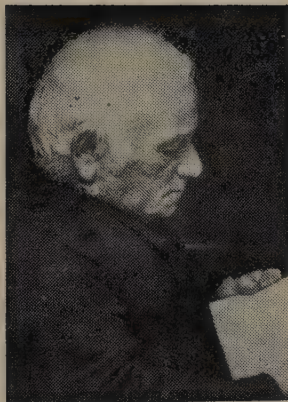
Rev. W. THOMPSON.



Mr. T. J. MATHEW.



Mr. HENRY BEARD.



Mr. HENRY SOLOMON.

closely associated with the social and spiritual advancement of Sea Point that I should take a Sunday evening service. And a good and glad thing it was to see how in the simplicity of those early days Christian men and women forgot all their differences and met for Christian worship in the name of the one Lord and Master of us all. That service was continued for many years in the present school-room at the bottom of Kloof Road. In course of time the increasing population required larger Church accommodation, and the Round Church (all attempts to give it any other name have failed) was built. This made no change in the spirit and form of the worship, for all distinctive badges were left outside, and only the name of Christ was the symbol and bond of union. This continued to a time within the memory of most of you, when the various denominations of Christians began to feel it desirable that they should provide for the wants of their own communities. It was thus, and then, that the Congregational Church was founded; and in 1895 I became its Minister."

Cameron was succeeded by the Rev. H. T. Marshall, who came to us from Methodism, giving the ripe experience and wisdom of many years. In 1906 the Rev. W. H. Richards began a ministry which continued for close on twenty years. Frail in body, but strong in mind and heart, Richards held throughout his ministry a position of ever growing influence in Cape Town and throughout the Denomination. Under him the Church grew, and the building was enlarged to its present proportions. He was succeeded in 1925 by the Rev. E. G. Tilley, and in 1929 by the Rev. R. J. Cooke, under whose happy ministry the Church continues to grow in influence and power.

### **Observatory. (E.)**

Until nearly the last decade of the Nineteenth Century the site of the present town of Observatory was a wind-swept waste, the only buildings being a few



farms and the Royal Observatory. But with the advent of the railway, and the establishment of workshops at Salt River, the district rapidly filled. A Church was built with the Rev. J. C. Harris as first Minister. It was essentially a young peoples' Church. Most of the members were young couples connected with the railway works. The Sunday School became a flourishing institution. As Forbes remarked, "We recruit our members from perambulators." When, after a ministry of three years, Harris left to go to Johannesburg, he was succeeded by the Rev. D. W. Drew for two years, and the Rev. Ben Evans for four. Then began in 1906 the fine ministry of the Rev. George Walker, whose memory is still fragrant with all who remember the times when the regular evening congregations overflowed the building, and the great celebrations, such as Sunday School Anniversaries, taxed the ingenuity of the Deacons almost to despair. Walker went to Durban in 1917, to be followed by the Rev. E. G. Mitchell, who did good work for four years. Under the ministry of the Rev. J. R. L. Kingon (1922-1927) there was an unfortunate split over doctrinal questions, which greatly crippled the usefulness of the Church. The character of the neighbourhood has now greatly changed, but the Church still persists, bravely facing its odds, filling a useful place in a crowded area.

### **Kloof Street. (E.)**

With the growth of the city the Gardens Area, which had earlier been characterised by large estates and a small population, began to be more thickly populated. A new suburb sprang into being, which, with the dispersion to the outer suburbs, became the only source from which such Churches as Caledon Square could draw a settled congregation. In 1897 the Rev. Alexander Pitt, having resigned his pastorate at Grahamstown, came to Cape Town looking for a place where he might exercise his undoubted powers as a preacher and leader. A number of friends, resident in the Gardens, invited

him to open a Church in Kloof Street. The money was found, and a small building put up in a crowded area, which was called Trinity Church, after the Church served by Pitt in Grahamstown. At first Caledon Square looked askance, but in course of time the inevitable happened. Caledon Square continued to decline, and was sold, the money was put on deposit for the building of a suitable Church elsewhere, and the congregation emigrated to the shelter of Trinity. Here for some years the two Churches continued as separate organisations, with separate Church meetings, under one Minister, and worshipping together. Pitt was a forceful personality, his preaching continued to draw an increasing number, and he came to hold a commanding place in the Denomination in Cape Town and throughout the country. In 1911 he was called to the Chair of the Union. The two congregations united, and a prosperous ministry was closed only by his death in 1919. He was followed by the Rev. J. A. Penalligon, under whose ministry the present Church was built, from funds provided by the sale of the Caledon Square property. He was succeeded by the Rev. R. J. Bowen, whose early death in 1928 was a real loss to the Denomination. The present Minister is the Rev. H. A. Parks.

### **Rondebosch. (E.)**

Early in the century the growing popularity of Rondebosch as a residential suburb demanded Church accommodation. A Church was gathered which invited the Rev. W. Forbes, the old and esteemed Minister of Caledon Square. No better settlement could have been secured. At first the congregation met in the Rondebosch Town Hall, but soon a site was secured in Belmont Road, where a beautiful Church was built, to which the congregation migrated in 1903. The beautiful stained glass windows, and the fine workmanship throughout the whole building, are a reflection of the spirit that inspired both Minister and people. In the vestibule the stone, taken from the grave of van der Kemp when the Somerset Road cemetery was abandoned, serves to remind succeed-

ing generations of the Missionary interests for which we all stand. After Forbes' death in 1911, the Church had a period of difficulty. The Rev. J. Martin Dower was compelled to resign by ill health after less than a year's ministry. Then came two short ministries, the Rev. J. Mearns Massie (1914 to 1916), and the Rev. F. Conquer (1917 to 1920). In 1920 the Rev. J. H. Atkinson began a ministry which is still remembered with affection. He was followed in 1927 by the Rev. G. P. Ferguson, who retired in 1931 after a serious illness. Then came the Rev. T. Downham (1932 to 1938). In 1939 the Rev. W. N. H. Tarrant, whom we shall meet in a later Chapter, accepted a Call.

#### **East Claremont. (E.)**

This is our youngest Cape Town Church. In 1930 Miss B. Finch, of Newlands, intimated that she would be glad to dispose of Craven Hall, a substantial building which she had erected at her own expense for Christian work, especially among the children of the growing suburb. She was anxious that the work should be continued on more regular Church lines. CUSA very willingly paid the original cost, £1,500, and in 1932 entered into the succession. Under the supervision of the W.D.A. services were begun by the Rev. C. T. Binns, who after six months was succeeded by the Rev. G. F. Parker, under whom the Church was formally constituted. In 1933 the Rev. G. E. Miller was called, who began a ministry of much promise, which was terminated by his death in 1935. He was succeeded by his son, the Rev. Vernon E. Miller, who after a brief period accepted the invitation of his brethren to become the general Secretary of CUSA. After a twelve month's interregnum the Rev. A. Mead accepted the Call. The work is promising. The people are keen. They have reduced their debt by £216, and hope to continue to pay annual instalments of £100. It should be added that when it became clear that morning services were necessary Miss Finch generously erected a smaller Hall on the property for the use of the children.

## Eary Missionary Work in Cape Town and the Western Districts.

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In an earlier section we have seen how the arrival of van der Kemp stirred the conscience of the Christian people of Cape Town and the West. A Missionary Auxiliary was formed, which within a very short time had raised sufficient money to build a chapel for the service of the Coloured population in Cape Town, and was reaching out hands of succour in all the surrounding districts. Here are a few glimpses into the activities of those days:—

From the Evangelical Magazine, 1803.

“Mannenberg is at work in Cape Town among the Christians and heathen. The conversion of the heathen is leading to opposition.”

“Bekker is at Stellenbosch where he has opened a school for slaves with thirty scholars, and is constantly at work itinerating and preaching among the farms.” Later he is ordered by the local Church authorities to leave the district, but is given permission to continue at the Paarl.

“Tromp has opened a Mission to Hottentots, Mosambiquers and slaves. He exercises his Ministry in the house, built for public worship, twice on the Lord’s day and every Tuesday in the afternoons. Twenty slaves are learning the alphabet, thirty can spell, and five can read.”

1806. Henry Martyn on a voyage to the East touches at the Cape, and seeks out van der Kemp, who is held in Cape Town awaiting the Governor’s pleasure. “It was long before I could find him. At length I did. He was standing outside of the house looking up at the stars. A great number of black people were sitting around..... I was beyond measure delighted. I hardly knew what to do..... Walking home I asked

him if he had ever repented of his undertaking. "No," said the old man, "and I would not exchange my work for a kingdom."

All this activity in and around Cape Town was a part of the far-flung endeavours of the London Missionary Society. Its agents were on the Society's books, and must have been in part supported from their funds, but the credit was allowed to go to the "South African Society for the spread of Christ's Kingdom." A pioneer Society must keep its eyes on the far-flung frontiers. The local Society vested such properties as it acquired in local trustees, which in course of time passed them on to the care of Churches other than CUSA, mainly to the Dutch Reformed Church or the Rhenish Society. The only exception was at the Paarl. As a consequence Cape Town is today one of the weaker centres of CUSA Coloured work.

### Harrington Street. (C.)

When Dr. Philip became Minister of Union Church he felt the need of an outlet for the Missionary endeavours of his congregation. Union Church had Coloured members, but there were large numbers of heathen whose spiritual destitution should be a concern of the Church. A property was secured in Dorp Street where services were conducted by lay members, and a school opened.

In the L.M.S. Register for 1839 is an entry:—

"M. Vogelgesang. Born in the Cape Colony. Had been connected with the South African Instruction Society. Was engaged by Dr. Philip, and by a Board resolution appointed to Cape Town as Pastor at Dorp Street Chapel, labouring among the Coloured population speaking Dutch. His connection with the Society ceased July 31st, 1849.

Vogelgesang appears to have been a man of some prominence. A street in Cape Town is named after him. In 1847, after eight years service, he broke his connection

with Union Church and in 1849 disappeared from our records. It was the first of several divisions which have greatly hindered the progress of the Church which we now know as Harrington Street.

For the next three years the work was in the hands of William Elliott, a man of humble and gracious spirit, one of many who have lived greatly in the service of the African people. A Cape Town man, he was one of those who joined in the Call to Philip to undertake the ministry of Union Church in 1820. Philip persuaded him to give himself wholly to Missionary service. For close on forty years he worked with the South African Missionary Society and with the L.M.S. It was probably during his short ministry that the centre of operations was transferred to Barrack Street.

From 1850 to 1889 the work was done by lay agents. Services were held regularly, a fine Sunday School was maintained, and a day school continued. Thus for close on forty years the members of Union Church, and later of Caledon Square, found for themselves a healthful life in service. Then came the time when the growing needs became too great for voluntary service. G. Bawn was placed in charge in 1889 as teacher and Minister. Then came J. C. Harris in 1892 with all the vigour of youthful enthusiasm. Two years later he was called to open a new Church for Europeans at Observatory. There followed a series of short ministries,—A. J. Burfoot (1896–1897), H. C. W. Newell (1898–1900), and Charles Phillips (1901–1902). Charles Phillips was from Johannesburg, a war refugee. He was a man of wide vision, to whom difficulties were as hurdles to be taken in a stride. He saw, what many had seen, that Barrack Street had outgrown the Mission stage, that it was ready for independent status as a Church. By his advocacy the property was sold, and the present site in Harrington Street acquired.

The sale of Barrack Street realised £5,300. It seemed a large sum, justifying a big advance. Some wise men,

such as Henry Beard, urged caution, but the enthusiasts prevailed. A sum of £775 was set aside for Native work (there had been a few Natives connected with Barrack Street), and out of the balance the Harrington Street site was bought for £2,250. This left a meagre sum for Church and school and Manse, and again the wise men shook their heads. And again enthusiasm prevailed. Subscriptions to the extent of £695 were given, and when the property was finished the remaining debt was well over £3,000, an impossible liability for a small community of poor people. The W.D.A. volunteered to assume responsibility until the Church could find its feet. The liability thus assumed was £600 a year.

The subsequent history of the Church has been one of constantly recurring difficulty. By the generosity of friends the debt has been reduced to manageable proportions, but the financial commitments are still an anxiety. From 1902 to the second settlement of the Rev. J. C. Abrahams there were no less than seven ministries,—all begun in faith, and each ending in disappointment. The evening congregations are usually good.

### **Wynberg. (C.)**

About the beginning of the century work was commenced among the large Coloured population of Wynberg. From 1902 to 1904 J. D. Orr did good work, and then left the congregation he had gathered homeless and pastorless. To meet their needs the European Churches of the Peninsula helped to build a comfortable place of worship, an effort in which the people co-operated. One gave a pulpit, and others subscribed as they were able. A debt of £900 remained which the W.D.A. had to guarantee. There have been a number of ministries, none of them long or successful. Repeated attempts to amalgamate the work with that of Harrington Street have been unsuccessful.



### Gleemoor. (C.)

In 1929 a branch of the Harrington Street Church was opened on the borders of the growing Coloured settlement at Athlone, largely through the generous gifts of W. A. Philip. The Church has now been separated from Harrington Street as a Constituent Church under the Congregational Union. The Rev. J. R. van Stavel has been inducted as the first Minister at a service attended by many representatives of the Churches of the W.D.A. The prayers of many will sustain this new venture, that it may lead to that unity of life among the Coloured people of the Cape Peninsula which can give to the Congregational Union a worthy place in the largest centre of Coloured population in South Africa.

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### The Work among the Bantu of Cape Town.

As we have seen, when the Barrack Street property was sold, a proportionate sum was set apart to provide for a Native Church. A wood-and-iron building was erected in N'Dabeni Location, and the Church set forth with the Rev. D. D. Tywakadi as Minister, supported by the interest and prayers of many European friends. The work has been difficult from the start. Bantu people are not at home in Cape Town. Those, who come seeking work, are strangers to one another and to city ways. If they are Christians, their Church loyalty is to the far-off community which they know as home. If they are heathen, they can be reached more easily by the methods of the Mission than by the organised life of a Church which must ask them for money, that it may be maintained. The Church has had a succession of Ministers, all of whom have found the work difficult. When N'Dabeni was given up by the Municipality and the people moved to Langa money was subscribed by Cape Town friends to erect a suitable Church. With this effort the name of Mrs. Walter Marshall will ever be associated.

She spoke the Native language, loved the Native people, and gave herself without stint to their service. The new Church bears her name, and will ever, we trust, be inspired by her spirit.

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## The Valley of the Drakenstein.

About forty miles from Cape Town lies, under the shadow of the great mountains, the valley of the Drakenstein, one of the most beautiful and prosperous parts of rural South Africa. Here the Berg River winds its peaceful way past farms and villages where many thousands of people, European and Coloured, make their homes.

### Paarl. (C.)

Work was begun among the Coloured people of the Paarl as early as 1817 by the Rev. J. Taylor, who was succeeded by the Rev. Evan Evans, and later by the Rev. W. Elliott. But the name most closely associated with the Paarl is that of the Rev. George Barker. He came to South Africa in 1815, and, after twenty four years' experience of Mission work in the Eastern Province, settled at the Paarl in 1839. There he laboured, beloved and respected by all sections of the community, until total blindness compelled his retirement in 1856. He remained in the village, the guide and friend of all until his death in 1861. He was succeeded by the Rev. F. W. Kolbe, another of the saints whose memory is an abiding influence. Mrs. Kolbe, too, was of the finest quality, a daughter of the Rev. W. Elliott. Early in their ministry the Church, which had under Barker been approaching self support, was given its independence. Kolbe was a fine scholar, with a scholar's interest in Bantu languages. He published the first English-Herero dictionary. He was also gifted in poetry and music. He collected the hymns used by the earlier Missionaries, adding many of his own composition. After his retirement in 1875 the Church

passed into troubled waters. The Church, though Independent, was not ready for independence, nor was the country. No Ministers were available to fill the vacancies caused by the retirement of the older men; neither was the Church ready to meet the financial obligations. Kolbe had received allowances to compensate in some measure any shortfall, but his successor would not be an L.M.S. man, and must stand alone. The Congregational Union, recently formed, was not as yet functioning in the West. While the Union was meeting at Port Elizabeth a telegram was received from Miss Barker that the Rev. W. Dempers had accepted a Call. The Dutch Reformed Church, of which Dempers was an accredited Minister, gave assistance, and soon the allegiance of a section of the Independent Church was drawn towards their strong neighbour. When the Union met in Cape Town for the first time in 1883, a strong deputation was sent to endeavour to win the allegiance of the people to those who were the natural heirs of their past. There was some success. For a time Dempers' name appeared on our lists of accredited Ministers. But it did not last. Zion Church became Dutch Reformed, and a minority left to form the nucleus of our present flourishing Bethel Church. We may pass over the sad story of strife, and just relate how the little band who came out met their responsibilities. At first they met as and where they could, conducting services among themselves. Then the Union came to their help with a Minister from Scotland, the Rev. A. Peart. An offer of money on loan was made for a Church building, which was refused. "I am a builder," said Mr. Weis, one of their number, father of the Rev. J. C. Weis of fragrant memory, "I will prepare plans for a Church, schools and teacher's residence, and find the money." Others came forward with subscriptions, some made bricks, and many gave free labour. Soon they had the joy of seeing a fine Church, seated for 500, with excellent school rooms. The cost apart from free labour, had been close on £2,000. The remaining debt was £900. They were still without a Minister's residence.

An excellent site next the Church came into the market, which they secured, and soon they had a fine, roomy and well-built Manse with a further addition of £400 to their debt. There has been no better example of self help in all our records. It would be invidious to mention names, but one name in addition to Mr. Weis cannot be passed by. A good school-master is often as great an asset as a good Minister. Mr. Hendrickse, the Principal of the school, the father of one of our esteemed Ministers, was a tower of strength in wise counsel and leadership.

In the meantime Peart had been succeeded by the Rev. James Ramage, who for ten years led the Church with much ability. In 1912 the present Minister, the Rev. W. H. Lloyd, began a ministry which promises to be a life work, the principal feature of which is the advancement of higher education among the Coloured people. The Athlone Training Institute and Secondary School are interdenominational, but they owe most to the wise and energetic leadership of our Minister.

### **French Hoek. (C.)**

In a lovely valley near the sources of the Berg River is a cluster of farms, with a nucleus in a village. Here under the shade of many oaks planted by French Huguenots nearly three centuries ago, live many Coloured people, who find their main sustenance in the service of the farmers. There is a Dutch Mission here of old standing, but it does not meet the full need. In 1902 a number of our people built for themselves a Church and school and applied for a Minister. They were received as a branch of the Paarl Church, and in 1907 the Rev. W. H. Lloyd arrived with Mrs. Lloyd to take charge. Then came the Rev. G. F. Parker, later the able Librarian of the Cape Town University, and then the Rev. J. Ramage. They are now associated with the neighbouring Church at Pniel.

### **Pniel. (C.)**

If a beauty competition among Churches were to be instituted, Pniel would be hard to beat. In an open gorge between mighty mountains, with a river winding below and a road winding between, the Mission House, School, Church and gardens stand among groves of oak and pine. Here in 1843 a young man, J. F. Stegman, began a life work. Three farmers of the neighbourhood, godly men, had applied to Dr. Philip for a Missionary to care for the spiritual needs of their labourers. But Dr. Philip had no one to send. They applied to a Society in Cape Town known as the Apostolic Missionary Society, who sent young Stegman, a lad of eighteen. At first the only property was a small plot of ground and a small Church not much better than a shed. But Stegman was a man of parts. Aptitude and zeal took the place of training. He bought a small farm, on which he laid out a village, making provision for house and garden plot. He scoured the country for suitable residents, the only conditions being good character, sobriety, the children to attend school and themselves to attend Church. The charge for garden plot with water rights, and a plot for a cottage was a half crown a month. For sixty-seven years he carried on his self-denying labours, taking no salary but the pennies the children were supposed to bring each week to school, but which they often forgot. The half-crowns went to maintain the services of the village, and the Sunday collections paid for lighting and cleaning. Fortunately he had a little money. Like a mediaeval Abbot he laboured for a life time as preacher, school master, administrator, and magistrate. His presence was the only law of the little community. Altogether Stegman was a man whom it was good to know. In old age he lost grip, and the station which had been a model of good order became unruly. When he died there was no one to take his place, for the Society which appointed him had been long defunct. The people were divided. There were law suits which impoverished the community without helping anyone. At last in 1917 a substantial

majority applied to the Union and were received as a Constituent Church. The first Minister was the Rev. S. J. Helm, whose wise and fatherly influence did much to smooth over the passions left after the recent storms.

Later Ministers were the Revs. W. S. Gouws, G. P. Ferguson, J. Craig and Potgieter. Under the Rev. W. L. Nell, who has served since 1930, first as Pastor and later as Minister, the Church has continued to grow in the unity of Spiritual power.

#### **Paarl. (E.)**

In 1900 a number of European friends applied to the District Association to be recognised as a Church. A suitable property was secured and a Church erected. The first Minister was the Rev. A. Heath (1901–1906). Then came the Rev. W. H. Evans (1906–1919), the Rev. A. Constantine (1920–1923), the Rev. R. J. Bowen (1924–1927). In 1928 the Rev. W. E. Morgan began a ministry under which the Church continues to fill a useful part in the social and religious life of the community.

#### **(3) Worcester. (E.)**

Worcester is one of the smaller centres of Congregational interest. A Church for Europeans was started in 1891 by the Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys, a veteran in the service of our Churches, who lost no chance throughout his long ministry in South Africa to forward the interests of the Union. Next year the Rev. G. Bawn, who had come from the Barrack Street Mission, was inducted. He was followed by the Rev. Alfred Olver (1895–1899), and the Rev. Ben Evans (1899–1901). In 1901 the Rev. H. W. Pells combined the services of the Church with his duties as schoolmaster. There is a nice property, a Manse and Church, and a small but earnest congregation.

#### **Worcester. (C.)**

This is an offshoot from the Rhenish Mission, which in association with the Dutch Reformed Church, does most of the Coloured work of the district. It was received into the Union in 1909. There is a good property, consisting of Church, school and Manse. The people are for the most part farm labourers, who do what they can

to maintain the work. The first Minister was the Rev. J. W. van Stavel (1913–1918). Other Ministers have been the Rev. Saul Damon (1928–1932), and the Rev. J. L. September. The membership is given as 360, and there are 240 children in the Sunday School.

#### (4). **The North West.** (C.)

Those who have travelled through the North West Cape know its fascination. Vast wastes of sandy desert, wind-blown, sun-tortured, with the Great River at times in fierce flood, at others flowing in peaceful calm amid giant thorn trees. For us it is a land of memories. Here Kicherer led his band of pioneers in 1800, and here in the following years came William Anderson to found the Mission to the Griquas. Four miles North of the River Christian Albrecht founded two stations in 1806. In 1812 Mrs. Albrecht laid down her brave young life at Silver Fountain. In 1815 Ebner established a Mission at Pella, whence he set out to visit Africaner's kraal, taking his life in his hands. Associated with Pella are Henry Helm and his esteemed wife. In 1818 Robert Moffat explored the Damara country, and returned to Cape Town bringing the savage Africaner, now a humble disciple of Jesus Christ. Those were the wild days, when the ways of the people matched the wildness of the land. Kicherer describes them:—"Their habitations are generally among the rocks, where they dig a small round den about three feet deep which they sometimes cover with reeds. Here they spend most of their time in sleep, except when roused by hunger, when they sally forth in search of some wild beasts." As we have seen in an earlier Chapter, our connection with the country ceased when in 1820 Dr. Philip withdrew the L.M.S. agents to more promising fields.

We come now to an interesting bit of South African history. As early as the beginnings of the 18th Century groups of Coloured people had been entering this land from the more settled regions to the South. Some were escaped slaves or fugitives from justice, others were adventurous spirits seeking the loneliness and freedom of veld life. They spread themselves throughout the vast spaces, and along the Orange River, and as far North as Rehoboth, in what is now the Mandated Terri-



tory of South West Africa. The German Missionaries were their spiritual fathers. After the emancipation of the slaves in 1838 another, and more stable element came,—groups of freed slaves who trekked with their goods and families, seeking a place where they might establish themselves in their new found freedom. So the Bastards, as they were called, or called themselves, came into being.

To the North of the River, in what is now known as Gordonia, lived a Hottentot clan known as the Korannas. In 1869 their Captain, Klas Lukas, made it known that he would welcome a Missionary. The Dutch Reformed Church heard the appeal, but having no agent of their own, engaged a Rhenish Missionary, who began work on the present site of Upington. But the Korannas did not take kindly to the Gospel. By their neglect they allowed the Bastards to oust them. Then a few years later the Korannas went into rebellion. The Colonial authorities armed the Bastards, who soon cleaned the country,—a euphemism for extermination. Thus a strip of territory outside the Colonial boundary came under the Union Jack, with the Bastards in possession. The country was surveyed by the rough-and-ready frontier method of a man riding on horseback, and so the one-time slaves, after long wanderings found their Canaan. There followed a period of Patriarchal life. Those who had farms built themselves homesteads, small cottages of stone under thatched roof, but without flooring or ceiling, for timber was scarce. Round the homesteads were the straw huts of their dependents. They had cattle, and were not wanting in industry. A furrow fourteen miles long brought water to their gardens. The Church, where the Missionary ruled as law-giver and magistrate, was central. There was no other authority. They had schools, and in the homes family worship began and closed each day. As we shall see in a later Chapter similar states existed at an earlier date among the Griquas of the L.M.S. Missions of Griquatown and Philippolis.

In 1899 came the Boer war. The Missionary declared for the Boers, his people were steadfast for the British. The division that followed led to an almost unanimous appeal to CUSA to come to their aid. There was a delay of several years, for CUSA does not readily enter another man's field. Deputations were sent, and it became clear that the breach with the Dutch Reformed Church was final. A Call to the Rev. A. Stewart of Heidelberg was upheld, and the work thus passed to our care.

Stewart spent sixteen years in the district (1902 to 1917), in journeyings oft, in heat and in cold, and ever in isolation. His parish was 150 miles by 200. His centres were Upington, Keimoes and Kenhardt. New buildings were put up by the people to replace the old, which were found to be vested in the Dutch Reformed Church. Schools were opened. It was a great ministry, which laid broad foundations for the years to come. Following him came a five years' interregnum, during which the Rev. W. H. Lloyd, as Consul, paid stated visits. In 1923 the Rev. S. A. Horne began a five years' ministry, doing what a young man fresh from College can do in unfamiliar surroundings. In 1933 the Rev. Saul Damon began a ministry which still continues. One who knows the work well says,—“He is developing and extending the work in a wonderful way, with a net-work of schools throughout the vast territory.” There are now four central Churches, with twenty-one Outstations. The Church membership is over 2,000.

The character of the district has now greatly changed. The world war brought the railway, and with it an influx of European settlers. Upington is now a modern South African town, roads have been built, and the old Patriarchal ways are of the past. The Bastards, or as they now call themselves the Coloured people, no longer own the land. As we shall see in other instances, a primitive people cannot retain land when it becomes valuable. The temptation of shops, and the chance of quick money by mortgage and sale, overcome them. But the Church and schools stand as their anchorage, and their hope for the years to come.



Charles Pacalt was at that time looking for a place where he could dedicate his energies. He had been associated with van der Kemp at Bethelsdorp, and was with him when he died at Cape Town. After his leader's death he spent some time at Swellendam. He accepted Campbell's suggestion that he should go to Hooge Kraal. There he remained for five years, when he followed his friend and father in God into the unseen. The time had been short, but he had established a permanent Mission, which on the suggestion of the Landdrost of George was called after him. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. G. Messer. When Campbell paid his second visit in 1820 he was able to write a most encouraging report. The improvements had far exceeded expectations. He found the whole institution surrounded by a wall, with separate enclosures for gardens and pens for sheep and cattle. There was a dam for impounding water. "All these are public works, performed by the people in a body, each sex, and all ages labouring together, the Missionary directing." The little community possessed five waggons, 150 oxen, 100 cows, with 53 calves. During the past year they had reaped 100 sacks of corn. The worship was well attended, the women dressed as well as in a country Church in England. There were seventy in attendance at the day school. Mr. Pacalt had left the whole of his small fortune to the Institution, 3,237 rix-dollars.

When Dr. Philip brought his scheme of reorganisation into working order in 1822, Messer was removed to Bethelsdorp, and William Anderson, the veteran of the Griqua Mission, brought his ripe experience to Pacaltsdorp. Pacalt's legacy, valued at about £300, was used to build the Church and schools. Who the architect was we do not know, probably Roger Edwards, who was for a time associated with the work, and later assisted Moffat in building the Church at Kuruman. The people assisted with free labour, the women treading the clay. Anderson remained in charge until his retirement in 1848. He

died at Pacaltsdorp in 1852. He had passed forty-seven years in active service. Of him Lovett writes:—

“He was one of the pioneers in one of the hardest of African fields, and one of the most successful of Christian workers. The history of Pacaltsdorp is one of the most successful in the Society’s book. The founder transformed the moral and spiritual wilderness into a garden, and died there; while Anderson spent the last twenty-seven years of his active life there, most of his family actively co-operating with him in evangelical and educational work..... Begun in prayer and self sacrifice Pacaltsdorp became a haven of refuge for the down-trodden and oppressed; it uplifted and instructed the degraded, forlorn and ignorant slaves and Hottentots; the first workers linked their lives inseparably with its interests..... Pacaltsdorp, a visitor said in 1831, is one of the places on which the eyes look and the thoughts dwell with peculiar feelings of satisfaction..... Comparing what the station was when it was established with what it now is, it may well be said, What hath God wrought?”

The next Minister was the Rev. T. Atkinson. Anderson and Atkinson were alike in their sincerity and devotion, but in external respects as unlike as any two men could be. Anderson was a typical pioneer, Atkinson was the scholar and man of contemplative habit. In dress he was immaculate and of the old style. He wore only blacks. The coat was swallow-tailed, the trousers old-fashioned cut. The stockings white as snow, the collar Gladstonian, the neckcloth white, of ample dimensions, wound round and round, and the ends neatly tied..... The shoes were silk-laced, and silver-buckled, the hat high-crowned, of black silk. “But,” to quote the Rev. W. Dower, to whom we owe this description of his dress, “the very look of the man was soothing and irenical. It preached without words placability, conciliation, forgiveness. The charm of his look lay rather in expression than in feature. Tenderness and sympathy, serene

happy contentment, and a sunny hopefulness lay in those deep grey eyes." His wife was the sister of Mr. Henry Arderne of Claremont, whose wonderful garden often entertained the Assembly in later days. She matched her husband in refinement of appearance and character. Atkinson remained in charge until 1882, a period of thirty-four years.

In 1879 the Rev. G. B. Anderson arrived as assistant, and successor. He also was one of God's elect, a man gracious, devoted, simple in thought and motive, with one purpose to do well the task God had placed in his privileged hands. Under him the educational and religious work was continued and developed. He began work at the Great Brak River of which we will presently tell. In all his labours he was ably seconded by his beloved wife, and later by his sons and daughters. When he died in 1923 his son John took charge of both Church and school, in which he was ably assisted by his mother, a beloved Mother in Israel. In 1930 John was ordained, and"remains in charge.

### **The Long Kloof and Uniondale. (C.)**

Sometime in the late thirties a Dutch farmer at Avontuur offered a portion of a dwelling-house for meetings, together with facilities for the settlement of a limited number of Coloured people. This gave William Anderson an opportunity. He released Thomas Hood from his duties as school-master at Pacaltsdorp, and sent him to the Long Kloof. Hood had been engaged by Philip in 1833. In 1840 he settled at Avontuur with six persons, who were his pupils during the week and his congregation on Sunday. He itinerated throughout the whole district, gradually gathering a congregation. Freeman, who visited the place in 1850, found a fellowship of seven hundred, who were busy collecting the means to build for themselves a Church to seat 400. Hood was ordained, and five years later moved to the rising little town of Hopedale (now Uniondale), where he remained as Minister until his death in 1863.

It is not clear from the records that the Church of which Freeman speaks was ever built at Avontuur. No trace of it remains today. The probability is that the material gathered was used in the building of a Church at Hopedale. There is a fine brick building at the latter place, which appears to date from Hood's ministry. In 1866 the Rev. William Dower arrived from Scotland to undertake the ministry. Some of the furnishings appear to be by his skilful hand. He remained for only four years, when at the request of the recently formed Evangelical Voluntary Union, he went to No Man's Land (now Griqualand East) to undertake the charge of the emigrant Griquas. The next ten or more years saw the little Church without a Minister. It was the time when the withdrawal of the L.M.S. was making itself felt in a scarcity of Ministers, and so isolated a community was one of the bad sufferers. From the baptismal register one learns that from 1870 to 1874 the Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, the Rev. P. D. Rossouw, served the people, and from 1874 to 1881 they had the services of the Rev. J. H. L. Schumann. In 1881 the Rev. Thomas Horscroft began a Ministry that continued for thirty-nine years, until his retirement in 1920. Both Mr. and Mrs. Horscroft were earnest on behalf of the people, but Horscroft's increasing deafness made him in later years very much of a recluse. The work begun by Hood in the Long Kloof, especially in the lower reaches, seems to have been neglected. When the Congregational Union sent a commission of enquiry they found the people sunk into a condition of appalling ignorance, without schools or services of any kind, and with scarcely a rudimentary knowledge of the Bible.

In 1922 the Rev. J. H. Badenhorst began a ministry which still continues. The Long Kloof has been reclaimed, and the work extended over a wide area. There are now no less than thirty outstations and preaching centres, with schools in such places as can sustain them. The membership has grown to 1,250, and there are 1,000 Sunday School scholars.



**Dysselsdorp. (C.)**

This is the oldest Church of the Little Karroo. In early days all the vast area between the Outeniqua Mountains and the Zwartbergen was its parish. The first Minister was John Melvill. Melvill came to South Africa as an agent of the Colonial Government. Coming under the influence of Dr. Philip in Cape Town, he resigned his Government appointment with all its social and material advantages, to become a Missionary of the Gospel. He served in the Griqua Mission, then at Uitenhage, and at Hankey. In 1838 failing health demanded a dry climate. He went to what was at the time an outstation of Pacaltsdorp, a farm on the Olifants River granted by Government as a cattle post for the Coloured people connected with the Mission. Here he established an "Institution." He remained for eight years, when increasing blindness led to his retirement to Matjes River, a Coloured settlement under the shadow of the Zwartbergen. He died at George in 1852. Melvill was one of the Great-Hearts of the African Church; a man of great devotion, fearless courage, and of much practical ability. The tradition of his life still lingers in the South West. Under his oversight the Church and Mission House were built, and a large tract of land put under irrigation.

He was followed by B. E. Anderson, son of the Minister of Pacaltsdorp. He came to Dysselsdorp as schoolmaster to assist Melvill in 1844, and on the latter's retirement to Matjes River two years later, was ordained and placed in charge. Freeman, who visited in 1849, gives an interesting glimpse of the station as it then was. He found a good substantial Church building, which had been raised entirely by the efforts of the people, who gave their personal labour, lent their waggons, and made bricks. It was seated for 300, but 400 crowded into it, while another 100 were crowded about the doors and windows. "It was an interesting sight on Friday and Saturday to see the people arriving in their waggons with their families from great distances. From fourteen to fifteen groups arrived in this manner. They have already

done more than others, the Auxiliary having raised £65 for the expenses of the station, and they promise £100. I was much interested in the spirit and manner of the people throughout the day. They appear interested and anxious to profit. Their sobriety of manner, and kindness one to another, their simplicity and truthfulness of deportment appear in very pleasant and attractive forms. The singing was good..... I was not aware of it at the time, that very many of them had brought presents for Mrs. Anderson in consideration of her having strangers in the house. Eggs, poultry, fruit, vegetables, etc., came in abundance. And they did this in a very delicate manner. I did not see the presents brought; they took them quietly to Mrs. Anderson, and then came to present their salutations to the visitor." At a Missionary meeting held at this time they took a collection towards the cost of a new chapel at the rising village of Oudtshoorn, which was so good that they asked to have it repeated. The total given was £10.

In 1862 Anderson removed to Oudtshoorn to take charge of its growing congregation, and with it Matjes River. After him there came three short ministries, S. P. Elliott, under whom the congregation undertook to provide the whole salary, H. C. Williamson and R. Langford. Then followed the Rev. J. Ramage from 1881 to 1890. Then E. Newton and J. Rogers for short periods, and from 1903 to 1920 the Rev. H. J. Blazey. In 1923 the Rev. J. W. van Stavel succeeded. The people are not as prosperous as they were fifty years ago. The general prosperity of the district which came with the ostrich feather boom was their undoing. Primitive people do not easily retain property when it becomes valuable. In earlier days they lived their simple lives far from the temptations of shops with their luxuries. When they found their little plots worth as much as £100 an acre they were unable to resist the allurements of the speculator. Some sold their lands, while others, who cherished their old homes too much to sell, could not resist the lure of unlimited credit until their little patrimony was eaten up.

One story may be told as an illustration of the manner in which both here and in other places, such as Upington, the Coloured man has been deprived of his land. An erfholder resisted every temptation to sell or to take credit, until one year he found himself short of seed for the sowing. He appealed to the local shop-keeper, who readily acceded to his request on condition that one hour's water-leading a week was ceded. This seemed harmless, but when it had been repeated a sufficient number of times, he found himself with a dry erf worth no more than £5 an acre. Today there are no Coloured owners of irrigable land in Dysselsdorp. The village has become a huddle of small houses on a rocky kopje, and the people reduced to the status of labourers on lands which once their fathers owned. But there are still over a thousand members scattered along the fertile farms of the Olifants River, and the old buildings, both on the main station and on the outstations, are kept in fair repair. The Rev. R. Lane is in charge.

### **Oudtshoorn. (C.)**

A report on the work in the Little Karroo shortly before Anderson removed to Oudtshoorn shows great prosperity. Anderson is still a young man, radiant in his outlook. Writing from Dysselsdorp he says:—"It is a great sight on a Sunday morning to see the waggons come in bringing full congregations. Many are progressing in religious knowledge, improving in both temporal and spiritual things. The Sunday School is a great institution, but the day school is a difficulty, for it is not possible to do justice to it and attend to all the needs of so scattered a congregation." He visits Oudtshoorn every second Sunday where the people have built a small Chapel and have £400 in hand for necessary enlargements. "I have much to encourage me in the discharge of my duties at Oudtshoorn..... The people are in a lively state of mind.... many are enquiring the way to Zion.... The members both at Dysselsdorp and Oudtshoorn are exemplary in their conduct; and in their deportment to

each other we are much reminded of the simplicity of early Christians. With few exceptions they are respected by all about them." Also at Matjes River, an interesting little community close under the shadow of the Zwartbergen, near the Cango Caves, there is a fine spirit.

Under the guidance of the Minister nineteen of the people have together bought a farm for £4,000. A suitable plot has been set aside for a Church and Mission House, and they have subscribed £100 for this purpose. The membership of the group is 208, and their contribution to the L.M.S. Auxiliary is £68.8.10. They will be the first to declare for independence.

When in 1862 Anderson divided his vast parish, taking Oudtshoorn with Matjes River as his share, he lessened his responsibilities, but he also halved his resources. By this time the group had intimated their willingness to undertake the support of their Ministers. It was a bold step for both Church and Minister, especially the Minister. As we have seen it did not mean entire loss of L.M.S. support, for the Society undertook to make good deficiencies. But it did mean that the considerable outlay required for travelling, repairs to buildings, furlough and other incidentals would fall entirely on local resources. Anderson had a large family for whom he was determined at all costs to provide a good education. A letter quoted on page 34 of Section I gives a vivid picture of the family life. It is a characteristic picture which could be matched from many a Mission House of the period. Poverty undertaken for Christ's sake calls forth the best in courage and sacrifice.

In face of difficulties the family did well. Two of the sons became doctors, another a magistrate, and all, both boys and girls, received as good a preparation for life as any in the Colony. In Church life, and Christian service, they have ever been active. Two of the sons, Eben, the Magistrate, and Doctor Charles, have been Chairmen of the Union, as was their father before them.

Anderson died at Oudtshoorn in 1900. The finest tribute to his memory is the work he did. Today the

Church has a membership of 2,700. It has a central Church building with seating capacity for 2,000, and there are no less than twenty outstations, most of which have permanent buildings, and a good many have flourishing schools.

It is a great experience to be present at the marshalling of the congregation on any special occasion, such as the Jaarliks, or Church Anniversary. Three services will be held on the Sunday, each about two hours in length. The morning will be a Communion service at which over a thousand persons will break bread; in the evening there will be a preaching service at which the Gospel will be presented in its compelling power; and in the afternoon a conference will be held at which chosen speakers will speak on some topic, such as temperance, or "how to win the unconverted." Each year there will be overflow meetings in the adjoining school-room, for though the Church is packed to its utmost there are hundreds who cannot find a place. The admission of the crowds by the Deacons is an inspiration. Both Deacons and members are well trained. Without confusion, and in reverent silence, the multitudes are marshalled into their places until every pew is filled. The Minister of such a Church, (it does not stand alone, others of our Coloured Churches can show a like spirit, though the numbers here are largest), has more than an opportunity, he has entered into a tradition whose value is incalculable.

Anderson was succeeded by the Rev. T. J. Galley from 1896 to 1913, and by the Rev. J. Ramage from 1913 to 1922. Then came E. L. Nielson for a brief period, to be followed by the Rev. J. A. Mullineux. Among the many Deacons and others who helped to shape the life of the Church mention should be made of Mr. J. B. Edmeades, son-in-law of Anderson, who served for many years as treasurer, and Mr. Wagner who gave great service in the schools and as Church Secretary.

**Heidelberg. (C.)**

Heidelberg with its outstation at Slang River is all that remains to us of the once extensive L.M.S. Mission Station at Zuurbraak. In 1811 Government granted a farm in the lovely valley at the foot of the Tradou Pass in the Swellendam District. As if to make amends for their niggardliness in the Bethelsdorp grant, this was all that could be desired in beauty of situation and water supply. It was named after the Governor, the Caledon Institution. Its early history was not propitious. The first Missionary, the Rev. John Seidenfaden, was, like so many of the early men, a Hollander, but he does not appear to have possessed the makings of a Missionary. Philip writes of him that "he has no good qualities", meaning probably that he has none of the selfless devotion that goes to the making of a Missionary. But there were difficulties in getting rid of him. The Governor appears to have thought that he might do well enough, and as nothing could be done without Government consent, the man remained. However the Missionaries had their way at last. In 1821 we read "The spiritual condition of the people will improve under the arrangements made by Philip and Campbell." The population at that time was 1,100, and the Church membership 70. The gardens are said to be well cultivated.

In 1827 the Rev. Henry Helm became the Missionary. Under his devoted care the whole character of the Institution changed. For years it was a model of what such Institutions should be,—a home of peace and progress. As the Helm family have made a great contribution to Missionary service in South Africa it will be of interest to give some details from an account written by one of the descendants. Henry Helm was the son of Danish parents, who were the owners of a prosperous sugar refining business in Schleswig Holstein. There being plenty of money, and much worldly ambition Henry was sent to the expensive and aristocratic University of Berlin. There he learnt more than his father intended.



He came under deep religious conviction. His father threatened disinheritance, but he persisted in becoming a Missionary. He went to London where he was accepted for service. In England he married Catherine Turner, a woman of like spirit, who also had been accustomed to all luxuries.

In 1811 the young couple sailed for South Africa taking with them a wonderful collection of wedding presents,—a grand piano, much heavy furniture, pictures, and silver ware. All this was jettisoned in Cape Town, when they realised that such impedimenta would be a hindrance in the work they had undertaken. Their appointment was to the most desolate part of South Africa, the North West. For fifteen years they lived among the Bushmen, Griquas and Namaquas, serving with the cheerfulness born of their first consecration. Campbell gives a drawing of their home at Pella, a hut on a sandy hillside, with no vestige of green or shade except that afforded by the thatch of the roof. Here is a glimpse of their adventures. One evening Helm was restless. In spite of his wife's protests he could not keep still, sitting for a moment at the table to write, then moving about the hut. Years afterwards a Namaqua convert told how that evening he had watched at the window to shoot the Missionary, but God made him move whenever the gun was pointed.

In 1827, under the scheme of reorganisation made by Philip, they were brought to the lovely valley of Zuurbraak where they remained for the rest of their lives. Our informant tells us that some of the wedding gifts were recovered from Cape Town. Mrs. Helm died in 1841, and Henry in 1848. Their son Daniel married a daughter of William Anderson of Pacaltsdorp, also a veteran of the North West. They had two sons, Charles and Samuel. Both went to New College, London, to qualify for the Ministry. Charles was appointed to the Matabele Mission, where he had a great career. His patience in well-doing overcame the suspicions of the Chief Mosilikatzi, whose friend and adviser he became.



Hope Fountain near the old Chief's head kraal, now Bula-wayo, is his enduring monument. Samuel was thought not strong enough for a Missionary's career, and settled for a brief ministry in England. But the call of Africa was too strong. We shall meet him again at Grahams-town, Pniel and Brak River. Other Missionary descendants are a daughter of Henry, who married a Missionary of the Dutch Reformed Church, and their son who became Missionary in charge at Zuurbraak under the Dutch Church. Another granddaughter joined the Dutch Mission in Nyassaland. Thus there is an unbroken line of Missionary service continuing for well over a century.

Zuurbraak remained as part of the L.M.S. work until 1873, when it was transferred to the Dutch Reformed Church. When Henry retired in 1861, he was succeeded by his son Daniel. An excellent property was established consisting of Church, schools and Mission House. When it was transferred, the outstation at Heidelberg elected to remain independent.

Heidelberg appears to have been started as an Outstation in 1861. Henry Helm served it until 1883, when he was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Gamble. In the Year Book of 1884 there is an interesting account of Gamble's ordination, in which the cordial co-operation of the Dutch Reformed Church is an interesting feature. The Independent Church proving too small the Dutch Church was put at their disposal, and Ministers of that Church took a prominent part. The account proceeds:—"The occasion will long be remembered as one of very special interest on account of the thorough spirit of unity which was exemplified by brethren of various neighbouring Christian Churches who took part."

Early in Gamble's Ministry a remarkable revival took place which is still remembered. Europeans as well as Coloured people were swept by the tide of the Spirit. In all his ministry Gamble was ably assisted by his wife, an American lady who had been a teacher at Wellington: We shall meet them again at Uitenhage. In 1898 he was

succeeded by the Rev. A. Stewart. When Stewart went to Upington in 1902 he was succeeded by the Rev. Percy Bignell who remained until 1915. For three years Mr. A. E. Mayne, son-in-law of the Searles of Great Brak, served the Church as an Evangelist of the Union. Then Stewart returned for a second period. In addition to Mr. Mayne the Church has been greatly aided by the affectionate loyalty of a son of the early Minister, Mr. S. Helm.

### **Great Brak River. (E. and C.)**

Sometime about 1850 there came to the valley of the Great Brak, half way between Mossel Bay and George, a sturdy Yorkshireman and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Searle. Here they opened a small shop to eke out the meagre takings of the toll. One day there passed a Swiss shoe-maker, lately discharged from the bankrupt shoe-making factory at Blanco. In return for hospitality he made a pair of shoes, Searle supplying the leather. The work so pleased the Searles that they engaged the man to go on making shoes. So modest was the beginning of the great boot-and-shoe factory which now dominates the district. Both Mr. and Mrs. Searle were sincere Christian people, ardent Congregationalists, and temperance reformers. As the settlement grew the Searles provided a Hall in 1869 for the use of the Community. By their invitation the Rev. T. Atkinson came once a month to hold services. Europeans and Coloured worshipped together. On Atkinson's retirement the Rev. G. B. Anderson continued the visits. Thus began both our Coloured and European Churches.

From the start the Searles have been identified with our Churches. In another Chapter we will read of the service rendered by Charles Searle in securing Ministers from England at a critical period. In later years Mr. Tom Searle was closely identified in all that concerned our welfare. For many years he, at his own expense, secured a full attendance of the Ministers of the District at the Annual Assemblies. He was Chairman in 1907.

In 1921 the mixed congregation of European and Coloured members was divided, the Rev. S. Helm taking charge of both. He was succeeded in 1925 by the Rev. A. Olver, and in 1931 by the Rev. G. E. Miller. During the Assembly held at Oudtshoorn in 1930 a beautiful little Church was dedicated to the memory of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Searle, a tribute of affection from the descendants of the founders of the settlement. The pedestal on which the Baptismal Font stands is the post from which the old toll-gate swung. Thus symbolically is Charles Searle, whose gate it was, the Keeper of the Road for succeeding generations. The Coloured Church is now served by the Rev. John Anderson of Pacaltsdorp, and the European Church has the Rev. T. Downham as Minister.

#### **Willowmore. (C.)**

The story of our Church at Willowmore is a romance of persistent love for the Lord Jesus. Many years ago, there does not appear to be any definite date, the Coloured people began to assemble under the bushes of the bare veld to sing praises. So they continued, year after year, with no one to guide or assist them, until 1872 when they sought and found a friend in the Rev. T. Horscroft of Uniondale. They built for themselves a small Church which served them well enough for thirty years. If the congregations were too great, and the weather fine, could they not gather in the open air as their fathers had been accustomed. Gradually they got together a sum of money for a better building, and by 1906 had fully £400 in hand, enough to buy the material but not to pay architect's fees, and other expenses for so ambitious an attempt. To their help came the Rev. W. Dower of Port Elizabeth, who spent some weeks giving them plans, and assisting in the erection of the House of God. The members carted the materials, and built the walls. When the time came for putting on the roof, Dower came again to their assistance, and by the end of the year the present building with seating for about 300

was ready for dedication,—a proud day in the history of the people. But what about the Ministry? Uniondale was a day's journey distant, and the people wanted someone to live with them and serve them daily. They were very poor, mostly just farm labourers, but with a little help from the Union they were able to call the Rev. J. Parry in 1908. But by 1910 they were again without a Minister. Many years passed, until 1923 when the Rev. L. J. September came for a brief two years. Again there was a vacancy. In 1929 the Rev. D. P. A. Swart came as one sent of God. The people rallied, and in spite of poverty, and some opposition, they have continued since to build up the life of the Church, which has grown to a membership of a thousand, with 460 Sunday School scholars

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# SOME LEADERS OF CHURCH LIFE IN THE MIDLAND DISTRICT.



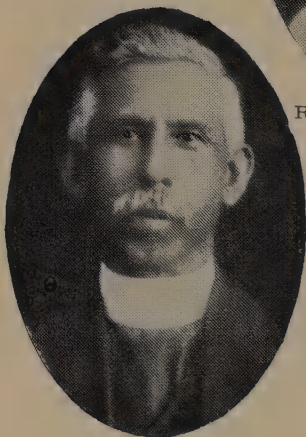
Rev. J. C. Mackintosh.



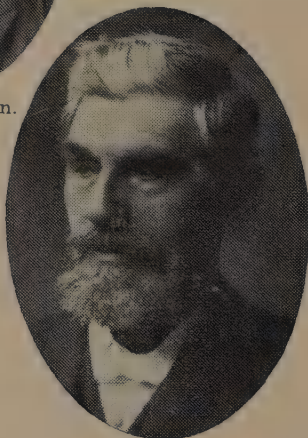
Rev. Edward Solomon.



Rev. A. Robson.



Rev. J. C. Weis.



Rev. William Dower.

### III.—THE CHURCHES OF THE MIDLAND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

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The Midland District Association covers the major part of what is familiarly known as the Eastern Province of the Cape Colony. It extends from the valley of the Gamtoos on the West to the borders of Natal, and from the Orange River on the North to the Indian Ocean. Today it is divided into two parts,—the Transkei, by far the most considerable of the Native Reserves, and the remainder (fully three-fourths of the whole), cut up into European-owned farms. Scattered throughout the whole are many towns and villages, each (outside the Transkei) with its adjoining Location for Coloured and Native residents. During the first fifty years covered by our story it was the scene of constantly recurring wars. The Europeans were pushing their frontiers ever Eastward, and the Ama Xosa were resisting. We have seen how in van der Kemp's time the Europeans were pushed back across the Gamtoos. But they soon returned, and the Fish River, then the Koonap, then the Keiskamma, and then the Kei became the Colonial boundary. Amid these scenes of turmoil much of the early Missionary work of the L.M.S. was done. The following pages tell the story. In this District, when peace followed the wars, CUSA was born at Port Elizabeth.

In our Story we place the centres not in the order of their present importance, but in the sequence in which they were first occupied.

#### **Bethelsdorp. (C.)**

Today it may be said of Bethelsdorp, as it was said of the little tribe of Benjamin, "Thou art the least among the children of Israel." But there was a time, as we have seen in a previous Chapter, when it was Mother Church of all the Society's efforts. History made it such, for it was there the work began, and geography helped to



establish it. In the days of the ox-waggon the best way to the Interior was through the Midlands, even when the port of disembarkation was Cape Town. The direct road from Cape Town to Kuruman was through the arid wastes of the Karroo, while from Bethelsdorp the traveller had grass and water. Few ships called at Algoa Bay in the early days. Hence we find Livingstone, who landed at Cape Town, making his way through Pacaltsdorp and the Long Kloof to Bethelsdorp, and thence North to his appointed station in Bechuanaland. This was the early Missionary road, and Bethelsdorp was its base.

We have already told the story of the beginnings. Here we take up the narrative from the settlement of T. S. Merrington in 1837. There is not much to tell about the Mission itself. It was slowly declining. The time was past when it was needed as a city of refuge for landless Hottentots. The Hottentots themselves were disappearing, as with advancing education, they were merged in the higher status of the Coloured people. When the Kat River Settlement was established fully half the people migrated with such flocks and herds as they possessed. Earlier migrations had been to Theopolis and Hankey. The old and less enterprising were the Bethelsdorpers who remained. Still the Church and village retained its place in the affection and reverence of the people. Here was van der Kemp's Church, and in the vestry was the Bible he had used with his name inscribed by his own hand on the fly-leaf. For more than half a century it remained as a place of pilgrimage for those who could remember that here their fathers first heard the Gospel which sets men free.

Merrington was a Cape Town boy. His father was John Samuel Merrington, attorney-at-law. Like most boys from prosperous homes in those days, he was sent to England for his studies. On his return he took up a business appointment, and (much more important) became a member of Dr. Philip's Church. There he heard

the Missionary appeal. He was accepted by the L.M.S. as a teacher Evangelist, and went to Bethelsdorp on a salary of £40 a year. For three years he continued to teach in the school, well content that in learning to spell, his pupils were setting their feet on the first rung of the ladder which leads to eternal life. From 1840 to 1852 he appears to have given himself chiefly to evangelism, visiting Theopolis, Grahamstown and Uitenhage. In 1842 we find him at Somerset East where he opened a school and carried on evangelism. At first he refused ordination, not thinking himself worthy. But when William Philip, the talented son of Dr. Philip was drowned at Hankey, he felt the urge to qualify for the higher service. He was ordained at Bethelsdorp in 1845. Two years later he went to Graaff Reinet as Minister of the Church begun by the Rev. J. Gill. Here he was greatly blessed, the work prospered, a Church and school rooms were built. It seemed as though he had found the place of God's appointment. No man in the little Karroo town was more esteemed by Coloured and European alike. But it was not to be. The Rev. J. Kitchingman, who had been at Bethelsdorp for ten years, needed for his health's sake, a change to a dry climate. At the request of the Society's agent, the Rev. W. Thompson, he consented to an exchange, and so by devious ways was led to the place of his appointing.

During the thirty-eight years of Merrington's ministry (1852-1890) the Mission House at Bethelsdorp was the centre of inspiration of the village and far beyond the village. His medical knowledge was ever in demand, and his services in charity were unbounded. In all he was ably assisted by his wife, a daughter of the Rev. J. Kitchingman. Their home was a social centre for the ladies of the rising town of Port Elizabeth. An obituary notice in the Year Book of the Congregational Union for 1891 gives a vivid picture of the man:—

“He laboured often amid great trials, anxiously and unwearied, preaching, itinerating, teaching day

and evening schools. He was a most zealous worker in the temperance cause. He was a lover of righteousness, of high principle, undaunted courage, clear-sightedness and sound judgment. He lived for the people..... In him the Coloured people had a true friend."

In 1879 he went to reside in Port Elizabeth, but retained his close interest with the people he had served so long. He became an active member of the Executive of the recently formed Congregational Union. In 1890, when on his way to attend the usual monthly meeting of the Executive he died in the street.

From 1893 to 1902 the Rev. T. S. van Rooyen was Minister. Then came the Rev. G. F. Parker (1905 to 1910), later librarian of the University of Cape Town. He was followed by the Rev. F. Scheepers, whose promising ministry was interrupted by his early death in 1919. Mrs. Scheepers was a Galla girl who had been rescued from a slaver in the Red Sea by a British gun-boat. After her husband's death she became totally blind, and was supported by friends of the Congregational Union. After Scheepers' death there was a long interregnum under the Consulentship of the Rev. J. C. Weis of Union Church. During this time, Van der Kemp's original Church, which had fallen into decay, was replaced by the present substantial building. The present minister is the Rev. J. J. Olivier.

### **Theopolis. (C.)**

This Church, at one time an important centre of Missionary endeavour, no longer figures on our lists. It was begun in 1841 on land granted by the Governor, Sir John Cradock, as a relief station to Bethelsdorp. The methods of work, and conditions of life were similar to those of the mother Church. The first Missionaries were J. G. Ulbricht and J. Bartlett. Then came the Rev. George Barker who did fine work for a quarter of a century (1815 to 1839). In 1829 a Church capable of

seating 800 people was built. Two years later a hundred families removed to the newly established Kat River settlement, leaving the station greatly depleted. Being on the frontier, in the disputed Zuurveld territory, the settlement was subject to frequent raids. From the devastations of the war and rebellion of 1850 it did not recover. It is now a Mission under the charge of the Presbyterian Church of Grahamstown.

### **Hankey. (C.)**

The story of Hankey must begin with a negative. No station on the books of the L.M.S. occupied a more prominent place, and none proved so disappointing. The redeeming feature is the steady persistence of the Society, and the heroic endeavours of a long succession of Missionaries. It was purchased in 1822 for £1,500 as an outlet for the surplus population of Bethelsdorp, the people of that station co-operating in the purchase by promising £500. The extent was 4,100 acres. The purpose was the elevation of the people by industry, education and self-dependence. The project was very dear to Dr. Philip's heart. The long list of Missionaries and Ministers contains some of the best-known names on the records of the L.M.S. and the Union. In 1842 the Rev. William Philip, son of Dr. Philip, began a promising ministry which was terminated by his death by drowning in the Gamtoos River in 1845. He greatly improved the material resources of the station by cutting a tunnel through the mountain, by which the waters of the river were brought to irrigate the lands. For the times, and considering the resources available, this was an engineering feat of much magnitude. He was succeeded by his brother, the Rev. T. Durant Philip, who continued in charge until his removal to Graaff Reinet in 1876. Dr. Philip spent the last five years of his life here, dreaming the dreams appropriate to old age. We may be sure they were, as they had ever been, dreams of the advancement of the people he loved. He is buried in the garden below the Mission House. John Mackenzie came for nine years,

1891 to 1899, giving the remnants of his strength in an endeavour to establish an enterprise which had cost so much in prayer and sacrifice. Several attempts to make the station a centre of education failed. In 1826 William Foster founded a school for the children of Missionaries which after a brief career was closed. Later attempts under J. Howieson and W. E. Morgan to train Coloured youths for the Coloured Ministry were also failures, not from any lack of ability on the part of the promoters, but because there were no candidates. Repeated attempts to transfer the holdings to Coloured owners, that they might find themselves in the responsibility of ownership, were also failures. Those who took up lands did not meet their modest commitments. At last the Society cut its losses by selling the irrigated lands by public auction. Thus the best lands passed into European ownership.

It is pleasant, after so sad a tale, to be able to relate one decided success. In 1900 the Society appointed the Rev. J. H. Walton to open a boarding school for the higher education of Coloured youths. Beginning with ten pupils the venture grew into the fine Institution of Dower College at Uitenhage which has for many years sent forth a steady stream of well-trained, and well-disciplined teachers to serve the schools of their people.

The lesson to be learnt from the failures at Hankey is that in all things African we must curb our impatience to keep step with the slow processes of God's appointing. He does not advance men to the ownership of land until they understand the duties as well as the privileges of ownership. He does not call his Ministers from among their own people until the people themselves are ready for such leadership. To this we may surely add, from the fine success of Dower College, that the way to prepare for the coming of a Coloured Ministry is through the apprenticeship of the Coloured teacher.

Hankey is now an Independent Church within the Congregational Union. It was the last of the Mission Stations to attain this status. Several of our best

Ministers have served it, among them James Ramage, L. J. Thacker and G. P. Geldenhuys. By the gift of the L.M.S. a fine little building has been put up for the European inhabitants. The congregations are small, but the Church serves a useful purpose.

### **Kruisfontein (C.)**

In 1837, at the time of the emancipation of the slaves, the L.M.S. were concerned to make provision for the numbers of emancipated people, who, it was thought, would be seeking opportunities to establish themselves in their new found freedom. A farm was purchased some twenty miles from Hankey, a village was planned with proper streets and water supply, and soon a considerable number answered the invitation to become erf-holders and residents. A school was opened with Mr. J. Clark as teacher, who remained from 1840 until his death in 1864. Services were held by visiting Missionaries from Hankey in a small wattle-and-daub building.

As the village grew the need for better Church accommodation and more regular oversight became apparent. The first resident Minister was the Rev. W. B. Philip (1856 to 1857). Then the Rev. J. McLeod (1865 to 1866). Then the Rev. C. S. Williams (1866 to 1870): Williams was a builder. He found a Church of wattle and daub, and he left a Church of stone. He was a man of generous impulses. The Church he built was ninety feet in length, thirty-six feet wide and high in proportion. The windows were Gothic. It still stands, a monument to the zeal and rugged purposes of the time. When he left for the Bechuana field he had inspired in the people, and especially in a young farmer of the neighbourhood a sense of dedication to high ideals. H. M. Ferreira became Evangelist in charge under the Consulentship of T. Durant Philip of Hankey. Impressed by the needs of the people and his own inadequacy, he went at his own expense to England to study for the Ministry. Returning in 1881 he became Minister of the Church, labouring

among the Coloured people of the village and District, receiving no pay but the meagre pence of the collections, until he died in harness, worn out by his Apostolic endeavours.

Then in 1890 came the Rev. William Arthur. Arthur was a man of great simplicity of character, and, like his predecessor, of Apostolic zeal. He served with one short break for close on thirty years. A friend writes of him: "He left the memory of a man whose love could never be denied, whose labours were terminated only by his death. In appearance he was not prepossessing, and his learning was scanty, but his heart was aflame with passion for the souls of men." A story current among the people of the district illustrates the impression he made on simple minds. They say a knowledge of the Dutch language was given him by a miracle. He went to sleep with the Dutch Bible open on his chest, and when he awoke he had a perfect knowledge of the language! He was followed by the Rev. J. C. Abrahams (1921 to 1926).

### **Uitenhage. (C.)**

About ten miles to the North of Bethelsdorp lies the pleasant town of Uitenhage. When at the close of the eighteenth century the Batavian Government began the building of a drosdty the Missionaries were among the first arrivals. They obtained permission to minister to the slaves employed on the building and the digging of the water furrow, and the garrison placed there for their protection. At first it was a preaching station, served intermittently as opportunity offered. But the village grew, and in 1828 ground was secured for a separate Mission. Here, on the site now known as Rose Lane, the Rev. Christopher Sass settled as the first resident Missionary. He was a Prussian by birth, was educated in Berlin, and came to South Africa in 1811. He was succeeded in 1831 by another German, the Rev. J. G. Messer. Sass and Messer were old friends, for they had



studied at the same University and came to South Africa in the same ship. Messer died in 1845.

The next Minister was the Rev. William Elliott, who was born at Sheffield in 1792. He had a strange and varied career. As a young man he made a tour through Europe, supporting himself by playing on the flute. It was said that he could speak most of the European languages. He came to South Africa with the British settlers of 1820, not as a settler, but to see the world. He became a member of Dr. Philip's Church, under whose influence he gave himself to Missionary work. He went to the East Indies, then to Madras, and then returned to South Africa. In 1839 he came to Uitenhage as assistant to the aged Messer, and after a co-pastorate of three years assumed full responsibility. Under him the little Mission made rapid strides. He preached in Dutch, Kaffir and English. Rose Lane, then known as Union Chapel, became a centre of wide and varied activity. There were evangelical services, benevolent and total-abstinence societies, and educational efforts for the uplift of old and young. European, Coloured, Native,—all were included. There was a miniature book-room, and a society for the conversion of the Jews, called by the suggestive title, "Israel's Wellwishers." In at least one year the sums subscribed for this purpose and for the funds of the L.M.S. totalled £64.10.10½.

When the Church was under reconstruction in 1896 a letter was discovered, apparently addressed to the Rev. J. T. Paterson, from which we give extracts:

"I was truly thankful to perceive that you had made up your mind to take charge of this station. I have no hesitation in saying that it will give universal satisfaction here. You will get all necessary information from the Deacons, but I think it advisable to leave a few memoranda."

Then follow several pages of information about the services, the schools, the finances, with seven ways of

getting money, and five ways of spending it. "After deductions are made the balance is remitted to Dr. Philip on account of the parent Society." He expresses tender regard for Louisa, an old servant, "a sincere Christian, most trustworthy, and well understands cooking with an iron plate." He adds, "We leave a favourite white cat under your protection in the hope of seeing her again. She is the best mouser in the world, and has as many good points as any reasonable cat-fancier can expect. As for the dogs, we have no sympathy for them, or care about them."

These extracts give a fine picture of the man; his attention to detail, his love of order, his affectionate zeal and his humour. His culture may be seen in his study Bible, annotated in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic, Dutch and English, all beautifully written.

In 1847 the Rev. J. T. Paterson began a Ministry which lasted until 1882. He had come to South Africa for educational work by invitation of Sir John Herschel. Impressed by the great need of the Coloured people he offered his services to the L.M.S. For two years he served in a humble capacity as teacher at Uitenhage and Bethelsdorp. In 1847 he was ordained and commenced his life work at Rose Lane. The Church prospered. Branch Churches were opened in the Winterberg, and wherever opportunity offered. In the growing town the services for all sections of the people, begun by his saintly predecessor, were continued. Rose Lane became the mother Church for all denominations with the exception of the Catholic and the Dutch Reformed. As time went on a process of hiving-off began. The first to leave were the Methodists, then the Anglicans. In 1881 Paterson, realising that the changed conditions made a continuance of joint services impossible for his successor, suggested the formation of a European Congregational Church. The Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys was called, and the last of the European worshippers left. In the same way the Coloured and Native Churches of the town are children of Rose

Lane. The Methodist Native and Coloured Churches are offshoots, as are our Elliott Memorial Church for Natives, and Dale Street for Coloured people.

In 1883 James van Rooyen was appointed teacher in the school. When Paterson retired in the following year, he was called to the pastorate by a substantial majority. His ministry continued until 1896. The last few years were clouded. A section of the people seceded, and there were scenes of disorder. At the request of the Executive of the Union the L.M.S. were asked to intervene. The Rev. John Mackenzie was given a power of attorney under which he closed the Church, and then invited all who would pledge themselves to live in Christian harmony to form a new roll. As a result the Rev. J. van Rooyen went to take charge of the work in the Winterberg, and the Rev. Thomas Gamble was invited to take the pastorate of the town.

Mr. Gamble continued until his death in 1931. His ministry is too fresh in all minds to require detailed narrative. An extract from his twenty-first report in 1918 gives vividly the spirit of his whole ministry:—"When I came to Uitenhage there were no outstations and the town Church was in a state of decay. Eight years after my arrival the town Church was reconstructed and enlarged at a cost of £1,200, of which the sum of £350 remains to be paid. Six outstations have been established, and on three of these substantial Churches have been erected, of which two are already free of debt. Our school buildings have been reconstructed and enlarged at a cost of £350. New schools have been opened at two of the outstations. In school affairs we have no debt, but a balance. Nine of our pupils have been trained at Hankey, all obtaining their T3 certificates, and all are usefully teaching. During the twenty-one years there have been three distinct periods of spiritual awakening, which have resulted in the ingathering of precious souls. The seekers' class has never been without members."

He was a man of selfless devotion, and of great practical ability. In all he was ably seconded by his esteemed wife. After his death Mrs. Gamble continued to take general oversight of the Church, in which she is ably supported by their son.

### **Elliott Memorial Church. (N.)**

To the North of Uitenhage is a large Native Location, where work was commenced as early as the time of William Elliott (1839). Later it became a separate Church. From 1885 until his death in 1900 the Rev. S. Sihunu served with much ability. An obituary notice in the Congregational Year Book of 1900 reflects the esteem in which he was universally held. "He was one of the finest spirits that South Africa has given to the Christian Ministry,—unassuming, simple and sincere, devoting himself to the service of his people with his whole heart. Content to fill a little place he filled his church with the souls he had won for Christ from heathenism, until it became too strait for their increase, and had to be enlarged." Then followed the Rev. N. Matodlana (1901 to 1912), the Rev. S. B. Kondlo (1914 to 1921), the Rev. E. Tseu (1923 to 1924), the Rev. N. Tulwana (1924 to 1937). All these were Ministers trained under the auspices of the Union, and all did good steady work in which we all rejoice. There have been times of difficulty which have been overcome. Twice the Church has been enlarged, and now seats 500.

### **The European Church.**

As we have seen, Europeans of all denominations worshipped in the early days in Rose Lane. In 1881 a separate Church was organised under the pastorate of the Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys. He was a son of a pioneer Missionary of Madagascar, born at Mauritius in 1822. He was thus nearly sixty years of age when he undertook work at Uitenhage. The first services were held in the Divisional Council Chamber, where a considerable congregation assembled, calling themselves "The United

Church." The Union gave a grant of £100. In a short time sufficient money was in hand to justify a building which was put up on the present site in Caledon Street, Jeffreys remained in charge until failing health necessitated his retirement, but not until he had climbed the ladder to lay the topmost stone of the highest gable. During all this time he was active in the service of the Congregational Union as its first (unpaid) Secretary.

He was succeeded by the Rev. A. L. Matson and the Rev. Comper Gray. This was a short period of unsettlement, resulting in a further appeal to the Union for assistance. As a result the Church became definitely Congregational, dropping the name "United Church." The Rev. J. F. Ecclestone had a short ministry of a year, and was succeeded by the Rev. G. P. Ferguson, who served the Church from 1892 to 1902. During his time the chancel was built and an organ installed. The Church proving too small for the growing needs, money was collected for enlargement, when failing health necessitated Ferguson's retirement. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. Angus who carried out the enlargement and built a hall. Later Ministers were the Revs. J. M. Dower, A. Heath, G. E. Miller and G. P. Geldenhuys. A feature of the Church is the fine ornamental screen, Communion Table and other work by the Rev. William Dower. The present Minister is the Rev. S. A. Horne.

### **Dale Street. (C.)**

When the Rev. James van Rooyen left Rose Lane in 1896 a section of the people left with him. They put up a suitable building in Dale Street and invited their old Minister to return from the Winterberg to serve them. Van Rooyen accepted, but his tenure of office was short. After his death in 1898 there was a long period during which the little community were helped by such lay assistance as was available and by a very loyal band of Deacons. In 1929 Mr. C. W. Hendrickse, a teacher at Dower College, one of their most helpful supplies, was

ordained and became their Minister. The Church is now working happily and successfully in fellowship with the Union. It has grown in numbers and spiritual power. It has eleven outstations, a membership of over eight hundred and a Sunday School with over six hundred enrolled scholars,—a worthy descendant of the work begun and continued at Rose Lane.

### **Port Elizabeth.**

When Commissioner de Mist of the Batavian Republic landed at Algoa Bay in 1802 van der Kemp went to pay his respects to his old friend and school-mate. The young secretary, Lichtenstein, made much sport of the scene in a racy description of the Missionary's poverty,—his ox-cart with only a plank for a seat, his worn clothes, and the umbrella the only protection from the African sun. The Commissioner, however, was more understanding. The meeting was significant. Despised Bethelsdorp first brought the Gospel to the proud city. When the British settlers arrived in 1820 the first arrivals were the Missionaries from the neighbouring Mission Station. A site was secured on the slope of the hill overlooking the beach, where by 1828 a small building had been erected. At first there was no resident Minister, the Missionary who was to take service riding over from Bethelsdorp on the Saturday evening or Sunday morning. The first record we have is a letter from the Rev. Thomas Atkinson who remembers how he and his wife used to visit, she dusting out the room and arranging benches while he went around to collect a congregation. In 1830 Atkinson came to reside at the port and **Union Church** came into being. After a two years' ministry Atkinson removed to Pacaltsdorp and the Rev. A. Robson began a ministry which continued until 1870. He conducted services for all, European, Coloured and Native, and for every creed, from high Anglicanism to the simplest Methodism. He was essentially the Evangelist, the man so fired with the urgency of his appeal that all differences of race and of creed had small significance.

As time went on Churches for the various denominations were opened, and provision was made, as we shall see, for the Native and European members of our own persuasion. In all this Robson was helpful, his sunny Christian charity in no way resenting such curtailment of his influence. Union Church became, as was always intended, a Church for the Coloured community. The Church grew in numbers and in power. In 1873 (the earliest statistics we have) there were 243 members, the average attendance was 400, the income was £346, with an additional £16 given for benevolent and Missionary purposes. This great ministry, as great as any in our annals, closed with Robson's death in 1870. His wife, the widow of Joseph Williams, the pioneer Missionary to the Amaxosa, who died in tragic circumstances in Kaffirland in 1818, was in all things a perfect helpmeet. She died in Port Elizabeth in 1879, beloved of all, a true mother in Israel.

The next Minister was the Rev. Nicholaas Goezaar, who served the Church for twenty-one years. He was born at Blinkwater in 1845, and was educated at Lovedale. In 1863 the Evangelical Voluntary Union arranged for him to complete his theological training at Stellenbosch. He was the only Coloured man to complete the course set for the students of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was in disposition quiet and unassuming, a kind husband, a good pastor, and an exemplary Christian, indefatigable in working for the welfare of his people. As a preacher he was inspired with a sincere desire to save the souls of men. Unhappily there was a breach in the congregation towards the end of his ministry which led to his resignation. He took with him a number of the members to form a separate Church. This was a real sorrow both to him and to his brethren.

Then came the Rev. William Dower, who for twenty years led the Church from strength to strength (1892 to 1912). "Father Dower" as he was affectionately called, was ably seconded by his wife, a mother to the people. Under their ministry the Mission House and Church and



schools were enlarged and beautified, and new buildings erected to meet the needs of the ever-growing city. Their building was not only in brick and mortar. Upon the enduring material of the lives of men and women they set their mark. The Coloured people of Port Elizabeth and throughout the Midlands found in them friends who gave them new hope, new courage, an enlarged faith in themselves and their destiny. The College at Uitenhage for the higher education of Coloured youth bears fittingly their name. It stands for the realisation of the ideals for which they dedicated their lives.

When Dower retired in 1912 he was succeeded by the Rev. J. C. Weis. It is sufficient commendation of Mr. Weis, whom everyone loved and respected, to say that under his Ministry the Church passed the high water mark set by his predecessors. When he began the membership was 450; fifteen years later it had risen to 1,400. New branch Churches were built, and the Sunday Schools under the superintendence of Mrs. Weis had an enrolment of 850. Weis was a son of a family closely and helpfully associated with our Church at the Paarl. He was educated at Lovedale where he was regarded as one of the most promising students. He was of medium height, of slender build, and his walk was indicative of his quick and vivid mind. He was the friend of all, a faithful pastor and an earnest and compelling preacher. His death in 1932 at the comparatively early age of 64 was a loss to the whole Union. His successor, the Rev. G. P. Geldenhuys, worthily maintains the fine traditions of the Church.

### Edwards Memorial Church. (N.)

In 1839 there arrived from England a young man appointed by the L.M.S. to open a school for the Native labourers who were flocking to the port. He was William Passmore from Southampton. For thirteen years, until his death in 1852, he continued to teach the rudiments of letters and of the faith of Christ.

In 1856 the Rev. Roger Edwards came down from the interior to take charge. With him the history of the Church as a separate entity begins. Before it had been a branch of Union Church. Edwards and Robson were old acquaintances, for they had come out in the same ship in 1823. Edwards was also a friend of Livingstone with whom he had worked among the Bokhatla tribe on the Western Transvaal border. Accused by the Boers of supplying the Native tribes with fire-arms he and Livingstone were expelled from the country. An iron pot used for cooking mealies was believed by Edwards to have been the innocent cause of the accusation. It looked somewhat like a small cannon. In the result Livingstone went away North to open the vastness of Africa, and Edwards came South to Port Elizabeth. In every respect he was the antithesis of his friend Robson. Robson was bookish, abstracted, imaginative, absorbed in things unseen; Edwards was of the veld, haggard and worn in appearance, intensely practical, a man of the people. Of books he knew little, but in all that concerns the life of the pioneer he was master. Isolation he had known, and loneliness, and the bitterness of finding men of his own race in league against him. All this was written on his face, for he was gaunt, austere, reminding one of a Hebrew prophet. And like the prophet he could blaze with indignation, for his temper was like a fire of straw, quick to kindle and as quick to subside. And with it he was tender as a woman.

For eighteen years Roger Edwards was a familiar figure in Port Elizabeth, ever diligent at his task in ministering to the spiritual needs of his congregation, and battling for their rights. When he died they honoured his memory by calling the Church after him. He seldom appeared outside his own chosen sphere of work, and he was one of the founders of the Union.

From 1874 to 1883 the Rev. Henry Kayser served the Church. He was a member of a family which has ever been steadfast in its devotion to Native interests. Born

at Knapps Hope in the very heart of the Mission field, he gave his energies throughout a long life to the service of the Churches he loved. He was followed by the Rev. J. Pritchard, who for sixteen years (1883 to 1899) was the active and assiduous Minister. He undertook the Secretaryship of the Union, then a small but lustily growing infant. As he said when resigning his office, "I have nursed the Union like a baby." He was succeeded by the Rev. H. C. W. Newell, who from 1900 lived in quiet devotion to the interests of the Native people. Under his Ministry the old Church, which stood in Parliament Street, was removed to Korsten, and new Churches have been built for an ever-expanding work. By his death in 1938 the Native people lost a friend and leader.

### **Pearson Street. (E.)**

The earliest reference to a service for Europeans at Port Elizabeth is in the diary of George Barker, an L.M.S. Missionary, who later became the esteemed Minister of the Coloured Church at Paarl. In 1815 he writes that James Read has been to Algoa Bay to preach and hold a love feast which was attended by four soldiers. Entries in 1816 refer to frequent visits by Barker to preach to the soldiers in the fort. When the transports bringing the 1820 settlers arrived, among the first visitors were the Missionaries from Bethelsdorp. A letter from the Rev. T. Atkinson gives a general impression of the plan of operations. Early on the Sunday afternoon James Read would ride in from Bethelsdorp accompanied by one or two of the Native brethren to hold a service in Dutch. Then later, A. Robson, after his service at Bethelsdorp, would ride in to take an evening service in English. Atkinson says that on the Sunday after his arrival in November 1829 he took an English service at the Bay. In May of the next year (1830) Atkinson was appointed to reside at the Bay,—the first resident Minister. While his services were primarily for the Coloured people, it is evident that he ministered to all.

The building in which Atkinson held his services was on the site now known as Union Church. On August 26 1825, a meeting was called, apparently at Bethelsdorp, "to consult about erecting a place of worship at Port Elizabeth for the Hottentots who reside at that place." Of the eight persons who responded to the invitation three were L.M.S. Missionaries,—Kitchingman, Monro and Read. The meeting appointed Read to go to Port Elizabeth to enquire as to a site and asked Kitchingman to solicit subscriptions. The site was bought from a Mr. McPhail for 200 Ryksdollars (about £15). The building was to be of brick, Gothic in design, and the dimensions were 50 ft. by 25 ft., and 10 ft. in height. Among those who subscribed were the congregation of Theopolis who gave 15 Ryksdollars (about a guinea). The opening services must have been well attended by Europeans as well as others, for the collections taken amounted to £12-12-0.

Thus Pearson Street was born in a Coloured Church. Perhaps that is why it has ever held aloft the torch of Missionary interest. Atkinson's ministry was brief, so also was that of the Rev. J. Baillie. Then in 1832 came the Rev. A. Robson, who until his death in 1870, remained as the inspiration of all good works in the growing city. For twenty one of those years, until the building of New Church in 1853, he ministered to Europeans and Coloured. It says much for the gracious wisdom of this saintly man that he was able to maintain an ever-growing influence among all sections of his congregation. The Rev. William Dower, writing of him in 1898 says: "I know from personal observation that there are few towns in South Africa, British or Republican, in which there are not to be found, occupying high places in social, civil and commercial life, persons who received their first religious impressions under his ministry."

In 1853 the growing importance of the town led the Europeans to desire a Church of their own. A site was purchased in Main Street, and New Church came into being. It was a commodious building, with embattled tower and three-faced clock, next to the Town Hall, the

most imposing building in the town. Some of the names associated with this early venture are Philip, Parkin, Chick, Griffin, Hill, Whitehead, Crooks, Leslie, Williams and Wares. Many became prominent in public life, and of their descendants some are still with us. The first Minister was the Rev. John Harsant. He was a man of stately appearance, scholarly and eloquent, but not so well equipped with the qualities which make a good pastor.

Shortly after Harsant's settlement the Baptists, and a little later the Presbyterians, hived off to form their own Churches. New names appear during this period, Hallack, Elliott, Jones, Collard, Tudhope, Dunn, Lord, Jack, Mathews, Baker, Tillbrook and Read. In 1864 there was division in the congregation, a section separating to hold services in the Mechanics Hall. These invited the Rev. J. C. Mackintosh to be their Minister. Seeing no hope of reuniting the two sections Harsant retired, and when Mackintosh arrived it was to a reunited Church. He was an able man, a thinker, an organiser, a shepherd of souls, a true friend, who wore the white flower of a blameless life through the years of a long Ministry. He died in 1888. As the city grew and people came to reside on the hill at some distance from their places of business, the site of New Church in Main Street was found to be inconvenient. The present Pearson Street Church was built in 1881. Later a fine hall for Sunday School and other Church purposes was erected, known as the Mackintosh Hall. Later another hall, during Tarrant's ministry, was built for the Primary Sunday School.

From 1889 to 1894 the Minister was the Rev. J. T. Lloyd, an eloquent preacher who drew large congregations. Following him came the Rev. Walter Friend, who for fifteen years served with marked ability. Both Mr. and Mrs. Friend were much beloved. The Church grew in leadership and power. Its members were encouraged to take leading parts in all good works, and the contributions to Union funds were on a lavish scale.

Following Friend came the Rev. T. Richards from 1911 to 1920; then a short and brilliant period under Mr. Ernest Dodgshun, a layman, son-in-law of the Rev. W. Dower; and then the Rev. G. W. Ackroyd from 1921 to 1924. The next Minister was the Rev. W. N. H. Tarrant, who served from 1924 to 1939, when he accepted a Call to Rondebosch. A Mansfield man, with a University career at both Cambridge and Oxford, Tarrant will have fine scope at Rondebosch and in Cape Town, but he will be missed both at Pearson Street and in the Midlands. His interest in all that concerns the Churches of the M.D.A. has been of first rate importance. Under his ministry Pearson Street, though not now occupying the commanding position of earlier days, has made steady progress, and its traditional interest in the Union has been well maintained.

#### **North End. (E.)**

When New Church removed to Pearson Street on the Hill the people of the North End of the town were not forgotten. It was decided to try the experiment of two Ministers, who would between them serve both the Hill and the North End. The Rev. J. F. Philip, son of the Rev. T. Durant Philip, grandson of Dr. Philip, was invited. Fred Philip, as he was affectionately called, was one of the most scholarly men the Union has known. We shall meet him again. After a brief trial the experiment came to an end, chiefly for financial reasons. For many years a Mission was conducted in a Hall in Queen Street, with which the name of Mrs. J. C. Mackintosh is closely associated. She was a woman of remarkable character, whose Bible Classes for women at Pearson Street, and services for all at the North End are still remembered with affection.

In 1898 the experiment was made of associating the work with the Secretariat of the Union. The Rev. J. P. Ritchie undertook the dual post. Ritchie was one of the most beloved of men, wise, witty, a preacher greatly appreciated by such as had the ability to sound the depths

of his thought. During his ministry a site was secured in Middle Street on which the present Church was built. Unfortunately the title to the property was found to be at fault and the Church was involved in much expense, which crippled its activities for some years. He was followed by a succession of short ministries with frequent periods under such lay help as could be found. J. R. F. Pledger, Mingay Gibbins and D. L. Nichol are among those who have rendered service. The present Minister is the Rev. G. M. Smith, son of the beloved Theological Tutor of Tiger Kloof.

### **Bethesda. (C.)**

When a split occurred among the members of Union Church in 1892 a section of the Church left to form a new membership-roll under the leadership of their Minister, the Rev. N. Goezaar. They met in a fine hall in Parliament Street to which they gave the name of Bethesda. Here Goezaar served them for ten years (1892 to 1902). After his death there were a number of ministries, none of them of long duration. Among the names are H. R. Lloyd, E. Palmer Jones, J. van Amsterdam, S. A. Horne. The Church owes much to the Rev. H. C. W. Newell, who during the frequent vacancies has rendered valuable service as Consul. The Church is working happily in fellowship with the Congregational Union. The membership has grown to about 700 and the Sunday School has been a useful feature of the work.

### **Graaff Reinet. (C.)**

Graaff Reinet is the oldest town in the Eastern Province. For many years it stood as the farthest outpost of civilization, looking North and East towards the vast unknown. It is finely situated among encircling hills, with the Sundays River flowing round it on three sides. Barrow, who visited it early in last century, describes it as a huddle of small thatched houses. Today it is a town of orchards and vineyards fittingly called the Gem of the Desert.



We have told in an earlier section the story of how van der Kemp came here in 1801, how with the help of James Read and Anthony van der Lingen he began an intensive Missionary campaign which greatly excited the wrath of certain farmers of the border districts, and how his retreat led him to Bethelsdorp. But the work was not abandoned. Van der Lingen remained as Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, and was followed two years later by the Rev. J. Kicherer in 1805. Kicherer was one of the significant men of those early days. An ordained Minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Holland, he became imbued with Missionary enthusiasm, offered his services to the newly-formed Amsterdam Missionary Society,—one of several Societies in alliance with the L.M.S.,—came to South Africa with van der Kemp, and went in charge of the Mission to the Bushmen. This we have told in an earlier chapter. He was a man of fine spirit and much erudition. But he does not appear to have had the iron persistence of his senior companion. After enduring the hardships of the Bushman Mission for a short time he went to Europe taking with him two converts, who were paraded and enthusiastically welcomed as the first fruits of the African Mission. Returning to South Africa he accepted the Graaff Reinet post. The whole of his Missionary career was no more than five years. But he retained his interest. Under his influence a Graaff Reinet Missionary Society was formed with G. A. Kolbe as agent, who “preached throughout the District to slaves.” We hear of him as late as 1829. Kicherer left Graaff Reinet in 1812.

All this was preliminary to the founding of the fine work which we now know as Parsonage Street and Middle Street. In 1846 the Rev. J. Gill, who had been driven out of Kaffirland by the wars, spent two years itinerating in the District. Then came T. S. Merrington “sent at the urgent request of Dr. Philip to carry on the work begun by Joseph Gill.” Merrington came as a school-master, By his kindness, humility and courtesy he won the hearts of all sections of the community. The property

in Parsonage Street was secured, and Church, school and Mission House erected. In a real sense Merrington is the father of the Church.

In 1852, at the request of the Rev. William Thompson, who had succeeded Dr. Philip as Society's Agent, Merrington consented to an exchange with his father-in-law the Rev. J. Kitchingman, whose health demanded a removal from the humid atmosphere of Bethelsdorp. Kitchingman remained in charge for twenty years (1852 to 1873). He was the first ordained Missionary. He was a quiet industrious man of considerable ability. In all his endeavours he was ably seconded in the school by Mr. J. N. Campbell, a Scotchman who had been engaged in the Colony.

The death of Kitchingman in 1875 marked, not quite the end, but the beginning of the end of the Church's dependence on the Society. They were still in receipt of financial assistance,—they did not become "Independent" until 1882,—but it was considered they should exercise their privilege as a Church by giving a "Call" to the ministry. By the advice of the Evangelical Voluntary Union they called the Rev. T. Durant Philip of Hankey. We have already met Philip at Hankey. He was at Graaff Reinets from 1876 to 1889, greatly beloved and respected by every section of the people. He was followed by the Rev. Charles Phillips, who gave seven years of valuable service. (1889 to 1896). We shall meet Phillips again at Johannesburg. He was succeeded by the Rev. J. F. Philip (1896 to 1906). Then came the Rev. J. B. Watson (1906 to 1911), and then the Rev. J. F. Philip for a second term (1913 to 1918). On Philip's retirement the Church called the Rev. J. W. van Stavel, who remained for five years, (1918 to 1923), and was followed by the Rev. M. Richardson. On Richardson's death in 1927 there came an interval until 1929 when Mr. H. J. Theron became the much-esteemed Pastor.

The Church with its five outstations is still influential in the town and district, though it has declined somewhat

from the commanding position it once held. Associated with Parsonage Street, but with a separate Roll is Middle Street. Originally intended for a number of Basutos, who had settled at Graaff Reinet, it is sometimes called the Basuto Church, and sometimes Klein London to distinguish it from its bigger brother. It serves a useful purpose as a place of meeting for the poorer section of the Coloured people.

### **Doddridge Church. (E.)**

In 1894 the Rev. Charles Phillips, of Parsonage Street, called together a number of Congregational families to form a Church for Europeans. They were fortunate in being able to purchase a building originally built for a Baptist Church. Here the Rev. D. S. Carlyle began a ministry which continued for ten years (1894 to 1905). He was of Scotch descent, a man whose one interest was the preaching of the Gospel and the care of souls. He was followed by two short ministries, W. J. Mowl and J. W. Parry. Then in 1917 came the Rev. M. Richardson. We shall meet Richardson again in the Transvaal. He was one of the pioneer Ministers of the Gold Fields,—a man of singular devotion and self sacrifice. He was followed in 1921 by the Rev. L. J. Thacker, who died in harness in 1929. He, like his two chief predecessors, was a man devoted to Christ and His Church. The Church has a useful place in the life of the Karroo town. It has a membership of about 100 and a good Sunday School. The present minister is the Rev. J. Thorpe Legg.

### **Aberdeen. (C.)**

Some thirty miles from Graaff Reinet, on the wide spreading Karroo flats, lies the little dorp of Aberdeen. When the Rev. Charles Phillips was at Graaff Reinet he urged the necessity of providing for the considerable numbers of Coloured people in the village and on the neighbouring farms. A Mr. R. Roman, a retired teacher,

was engaged as Evangelist. So well did the work prosper, that they felt strong enough to call a Minister. They joined hands with another Karroo Church, similarly situated at Murraysburg, to invite the Rev. J. D. de Villiers, who remained for two years (1890 to 1892). Then, when the two Churches became vacant, a call was sent to the Rev. J. C. Weis. This was Weis' first charge, and right well did he win his spurs. A quotation from the Year Book of 1894, less than a year after the beginning of his ministry, shews the character of his achievement: "A splendid work has been achieved at Aberdeen by our young brother. The new Church, which he has been the means of erecting, is considered an ornament to the town. The Union was represented at the opening services by the Revs. W. Dower, J. T. Lloyd and Charles Phillips. So much is Mr. Weis esteemed, that the Minister and Elders of the Dutch Church have handed over to him their Coloured congregation."

In addition to the Church a comfortable Manse, and later a school, were erected. It was a principle of Mr. Weis that good architecture and sound workmanship should distinguish all buildings intended for the use of the Coloured people. In addition to his Church work, Weis undertook the care of the school that his teacher might be free to go to Murraysburg. The double task proving too much for his health, which was never very robust, he resigned in 1906, but retained his interest by becoming Consul. In 1911 the Rev. J. R. van Stavel began a ministry, which continued with much success for seven years. Then after an interval came the short ministry of the Rev. A. Curry, a nephew of Weis. In 1924 Mr. J. K. Noble, a retired school master, became Pastor. Noble was a man of great devotion, whose sincere piety won the affectionate esteem of all. He died in the work, rejoicing that he had been privileged to give the closing years of his life to the preaching of the Gospel, which had been the inspiration and solace by which he had lived.

## Grahamstown.

In early days, before 1820, Grahamstown was a military outpost on the far Eastern frontier of the Colony. There was no settled population, only such drafts of British regiments as might be placed there along with considerable contingents of the Cape Colouredcorps. Here, from 1813 to 1817 the Rev. A. A. van der Lingen was Military Chaplain. We have met him before at Graaff Reinet. He was an L.M.S. man, who had left the service of the Society to serve as Chaplain. He must have kept an interest with his old associates, for we know that in 1817 the Rev. J. Evans visited him, and preached.

With the coming of the British settlers of 1820 the military post became the administrative centre, and soon a considerable town was in being. The L.M.S. sent the Rev. John Munro, who began work among all sections of the community. Union Church in Bathurst Street became the spiritual home for Europeans as well as for Coloured and Native people. It is said of Munro that he was "a stern man, people were afraid of his words and of his wrath." An interesting further glimpse is that "his wife came to Church in a lace bertha, with long black mitts on her hands and arms; she looked very nice." Then came the Rev. John Locke, who, our informant says, "was greatly beloved." After him was the Rev. W. S. Thomson, who retired in 1858. Of him it is said, "he was a lovely man, everyone loved him, and loved to see him." Then in 1859 came the Rev. Robert Johnston, who had a fine ministry from 1859 to 1875.

All these were L.M.S. men. During Johnston's ministry a separate Church for Europeans, known as Trinity Church, was built in 1842. Johnston continued to serve both Churches until the arrival of the Rev. N. H. Smit in 1862, when a joint pastorate was arranged, Johnston taking charge of Trinity and Smit giving his attention to the Coloured and Native people. In 1875 Johnston accepted a Call to the Hill Presbyterian Church of Port Elizabeth, and from that date the two Churches went their several ways.

### **Trinity Church. (E.)**

The story of the European Church need not detain us for long. The Rev. J. A. Chalmers was Minister from 1875 to his death in 1888. He was a man of great personal charm, a fine preacher, and a leader of men. Under him the Church was received into the United Presbyterian Presbytery of Kaffraria. When he died it again became Independent. The next three ministries were short: Rev. W. Tees (1889 to 1892), Rev. A. Pitt (1894 to 1896), and Rev. W. Liddle (1897 to 1900). Then came the Rev. J. Martin Dower for nine years (1900 to 1909). It was Dower's first ministry, and is still remembered for its fine appeal to the young people, who were flocking to Grahamstown from all parts of the Eastern Province to attend the recently-founded Rhodes College and other educational centres of the town. He was succeeded by the Rev. James Gray, a Presbyterian Minister of fine standing. In 1917 the Church became definitely Presbyterian.

### **Union Church. (C.)**

The Rev. N. H. Smit remained in charge until his death in 1882. It was a fine ministry of twenty years. The Church had now for the first time in its history to exercise the right to Call a Minister. They placed themselves in the hands of the Congregational Union, who nominated the Rev. S. J. Helm, son of a family, whose wonderful Missionary record we have already given. For nearly the whole of a long life Sam Helm, as he was affectionately called, continued to serve the interests of the Coloured people and of CUSA. He was a sturdy Independent, an Evangelical preacher of much power, and with a fine gift for friendship. In 1898 he was Chairman of the Union. During his ministry the old Union Chapel was sold, and the present fine Church and Manse built. He was followed in 1931 by Pastor (now Rev.) G. H. Dickerson, who is worthily carrying on the Evangelical tradition. The membership is 275, with

a Sunday School of over 200 scholars. The Native Church is now a separate organisation, also under Dickerson's charge, with a membership of 54, and a Sunday School of 37.

### **Cradock. (C.)**

The Coloured Church at Cradock is as bad an example as any in our records of the evils of denominational rivalry. There is an excellent property,—Church, Manse and school; and there is a small and devoted band of workers. Our work was by many years the earliest, and the Missionaries and Ministers who have served it are among our honoured names. But the intrusion of other Churches, all seeking to serve the same Master, has made prosperity difficult for all.

The work was begun by the Rev. George Barker in 1821, who served it as an outstation of his main charge at Theopolis until 1839. By that time the growth of population called for a settled Missionary. The Rev. J. Munro, who had been at Bethelsdorp as a school master and later at Grahamstown in charge of Union Church teaching in the schools and preaching to both English and Coloured, came to the post. He was succeeded by the Rev. R. B. Taylor, whose devoted ministry of twenty eight years was terminated by his death in 1876. The buildings date from his time. It was a period of great material and spiritual prosperity for the growing community. The Coloured people have had many devoted friends, but none who have served them with greater fidelity. He was followed by the Rev. J. F. Philip (1877 to 1880). During these early years services were regularly held in English for Europeans. Philip attempted to organise a separate Church but without success.

After the Rev. J. H. L. Schuman's ministry, who died at Cradock in 1889, came the energetic ministry of the Rev. J. Ramage. Ramage was one of those untiring men, who spend themselves in the Master's service. His ten years' ministry terminated just before the outbreak of the Boer war. The next ministry terminated tragically. The Rev.



W. Kenning, mistaking a summons by a British sentry, was shot dead. After the Rev. H. R. Lloyd had served the Church for a year, came the Rev. J. C. Weis (1906 to 1912). When Weis left to commence his fine ministry at Port Elizabeth, he was succeeded by another Coloured man, Mr. A. J. Hendrickse. He was as fine a product of the Christian life of our Coloured Churches as any we have known. After a long career as teacher he reached the retiring age. But he was by no means content to sit still to enjoy the small pension the Government service allowed. He became Evangelist in charge at Cradock, studied for the Ministry, was ordained in 1916, and continued to serve the Church until his death in 1928. Writing in the "Congregationalist" a friend says:—"He was ever happy in his work, and was rightly trusted and beloved by his people. His Missionary zeal never flagged. Quite recently the writer saw him in great distress because he had heard of some hundreds of Coloured people, living within twenty miles of Cradock, who had no knowledge of Jesus, and his physical weakness prevented his reaching them." He was followed by a man of like spirit, Pastor W. M. Boggendoel, also a retired schoolmaster.

### Somerset East. (C.)

The Boschberg, a great bastion of hills, thickly forested from base to summit, and watered by running streams, must always have been a natural landmark. Ten miles beyond runs the Great Fish River, the boundary of the Colony in the early years of last century. The river, after passing through rugged defiles, here debouches into wide pasture lands. Further South it again enters narrow bush-covered kloofs. Here was the natural entry into Kaffirland. Some enterprising man put up an accommodation-house where travellers could rest and refit. Hence the name Cookhouse. From here Eastwards ran the Missionary Road into Kaffirland. Van der Kemp must have passed this way when he made his first gallant attempt to establish a Mission among the Gaikas; and along this road he must have retreated, cast down

but not unto despair. On the surrounding hills Read a few years later lit his signal fires, and watched for answering fires on the hills opposite to tell him that the Chief permitted his entrance. Mrs. Williams passed this way when rescued by Robert Hart, a farmer of the Boschberg, after her husband died at the Kat River in 1818.

The town at the foot of the Boschberg owes its name to the Governor Sir Charles Somerset, who established a government farm here for the breeding of horses. The first mention we have of the preaching of the Gospel in these parts is in 1817, when John Brownlee, who had arrived from England the previous year, came from Bethelsdorp to the Somerset farm. His stay was short, for two years later he was at Tsatsoe's kraal on the Buffalo River, some hundred and fifty miles further East down the Missionary road. In 1835 the burning and plundering of his station brought him back for a temporary retiral which was "chiefly occupied in itinerating." In 1842 T. S. Merrington was sent from Theopolis to "commence a Mission." As Merrington was at this time a schoolmaster the basis of his work must have been a school. From this time the station appears regularly on the L.M.S. books. From 1846 to 1848 Robert Birt of Peelton and F. G. Kayser of Knapps Hope found refuge here during the disturbances.

The first resident Missionary was the Rev. Joseph Gill who arrived in 1843. Three years later war necessitated his retirement to Graaff Reinet, but in March of 1847 he was back. The next year he was succeeded by the Rev. R. T. Gregorowski. Mr. Gill's health does not appear to have been satisfactory, for after a short ministry at the military post of Fort Beaufort he retired to England where he died. Mrs. Gill, it may be mentioned, returned to South Africa, and was for many years the efficient head of a girls' school at Bedford under the Rev. Edward Solomon. Gregorowski was of Prussian birth. He was at Somerset until his death in 1880. Under him the

station prospered, buildings were erected, and as early as 1856 the Church declared for independence.

He was succeeded by the Rev. William Oates, whose long and faithful ministry continued for nearly half a century. He retired in 1928. He was a South African, engaged and ordained by the Evangelical Voluntary Union. His affection for the people he served, and for the Congregational Union, were abiding interests. His attendance at Assemblies was unfailing. At Somerset he was beloved by all sections of the community.

He was succeeded by two short ministries,—Rev. J. J. Olivier (1929 to 1931), and Rev. A. Olver (1931 to 1934). The schools, which have been erected under the present ministry of the Rev. A. C. Lloyd, fittingly bear the name of William Oates.

### **Colesberg. (C.)**

The little town of Colesberg nestles at the foot of a mountain peak, which dominates the scene for miles around. Here in the earliest days of the last century was one of the many fugitive Mission stations for the elusive Bushmen. In 1840 the Rev. T. Atkinson began a Mission, which he served for seven years. We can think of him as a sentinel in the wilderness, a tall erect figure, dressed, as was his habit, with the precision of an earlier day in frock coat, knee breeches, silver-buckled shoes, and crowned with white cravat and silk hat. He was a great soul, whose penetrating eye saw deep into Divine mysteries. In an earlier Chapter we have met him at Pacaltsdorp. He was followed by the Rev. S. N. de Kock (1848 to 1855). Then came the time when the L.M.S. felt the lure of the regions beyond. The Mission was transferred to the Church of England, and with it went the Missionary.

Half a century passed, and there came a split in one of the Missions serving the little town. A section appealed to the Union for help, who after due enquiry agreed to give such help as the newly-formed Church

could afford. The Rev. Adriaan Sampson came as their Minister. Sampson was a Graaff Reinet boy. He studied at Lovedale where his report says,—“a faithful and earnest student whose general influence in the Institution is good.” He served the Church for twenty-one years (1906 to 1927). A neat Church building of brick was put up, and a Manse of the same material built alongside it. He had under him as outstations Naauwpoort and Petrusville. His health failing he retired to Graaff Reinet, where he died in 1929. He was succeeded for a brief period by an Evangelist, J. P. Cloete. Since then the Church with its two outstations has been served either from Cradock or Queenstown.

### **Bedford. (E.)**

The town of Bedford was founded in 1856 as a centre for the large numbers of Scotch and English settlers who had come out in 1820. Among these was Pringle, the well known poet and philanthropist. A piece of ground was set aside for a Church, and W. H. Hockly, a prominent farmer, was appointed to look for a Minister among the L.M.S. Missionaries serving the Griquas. The Church fellowship was called the Bedford Free Church, a stipulation being that it should be for all denominations without denominational connection. The Minister chosen was the Rev. Edward Solomon. Solomon, like so many others, was a discovery of Dr. Philip. He began as a schoolmaster in 1839, and the following year was ordained and appointed to Hankey. In 1842 he was attached to the Griqua Mission. Owing to the incursions of the Boers the Griquas were dispersed, and subsequently migrated to Griqualand East. By 1856, when Hockly arrived looking for a Minister, the work was falling into decay, and the Society was proposing abandonment. Solomon accepted the Call and for twenty-five years conducted a ministry in the growing town of Bedford and among the surrounding farms. A Church and Manse were built, and subsequently in 1881 a larger Church became necessary and the old Church was converted into a school. It was a

great ministry, as great as any in our annals. He was deeply interested in the Union. He was the first Secretary of the Evangelical Voluntary Union, which he hoped would link together all Christian Churches of Evangelical faith. When this failed, he advocated the formation of the Congregational Union, of which he was the first Chairman. He was one of a few men to whom the L.M.S. looked for guidance in South African Missionary policy. In 1863 he was one of three Commissioners appointed to carry out the Missionary Institutions Act, which he had been largely instrumental in framing. While his main duty was to serve the European members of his Church, he was never forgetful of the needs of the Coloured and Native peoples. A Church was built in the village, which with its outstations on the farms, he continued to serve.

He was succeeded by the Rev. J. R. Jervis, who died after a short ministry. Subsequent Ministers were J. F. Philip, J. G. Layton, J. J. Vaughan, G. P. Ferguson and R. J. Bowen. All these were Congregational Ministers who maintained their membership of the Union. While the Church, true to its trust deed, did not send delegates to Union meetings, the members subscribed liberally to Union funds and read the "Congregationalist." The present Minister is of Presbyterian antecedents.

The Coloured and Native members have been formed into separate Churches served by such agents as are available, and assisted by the Minister of the Free Church.

### Queenstown. (E.)

As the Colony extended Eastwards after successive Kaffir wars a large tract of excellent pastoral territory North of the Kat and Amatola mountains, became available for European settlement. Queenstown, named after Queen Adelaide, became the central town. Here a Church for Europeans was established, which had, as a condition of its trust deed, a provision that its minister

must be either Congregational or Presbyterian. Edward Solomon of Bedford was consulted as to the choice of a Minister. He recommended his colleague of Griqua Mission days, the Rev. W. B. Philip. Philip settled in 1863. He was a son of Dr. Philip, with his father's burning zeal on behalf of the destitute and down-trodden. He found among the frontier farmers and their servants a fitting sphere for his abilities. A Church and Manse for the European Church were built in 1863, and in 1867 a Church and school for Coloured and Native people. He continued in the service of the two Churches until his acceptance of a Call to Caledon Square in 1884 brought a fine ministry to a close.

The next Minister was the Rev. J. P. Ritchie, who remained until 1898, when he became the first paid Secretary of the Union. Then came the Rev. W. J. Dower (1898 to 1909). Some local trouble having arisen in the Church, Dower's resignation was followed by a decision of the majority to exercise their undoubted legal right to join the Presbyterian Church. For nearly half a century it had been loyally and happily associated with the Congregational Union, had subscribed to Union funds, and had twice entertained the Assembly.

### **Crouch Memorial. (C.)**

The Coloured and Native Church, known as **Owen Street**, continued in association with the Union, but there was now difficulty in providing for its needs. Hitherto it had been a branch of the European work. The Rev. J. F. Philip came gallantly to its rescue, but failing health permitted only a short ministry. Then in 1918 the Rev. J. R. van Stavel began a ministry, which continued for twenty years, a period of steady progress in spiritual and educational matters. The Native work was placed under a separate organisation with van Stavel as Consulent. A new Church was built for the Coloured congregation which bears the honoured name of the Crouch Memorial. The old Church became a part of the

improved school equipment. Tarkastad and later East London were worked as branches. In addition van Stavel filled the position of Moderator for No. 2 area of the Midlands.

### **East London Coloured Church.**

The Coloured population at East London is by no means as large as at places further West, but it has been for many years steadily increasing. Families from our Churches coming to the Border Port have found themselves isolated, with no provision for their spiritual needs except by association with some European or Native Church. For many years the Rev. J. R. van Stavel was concerned to make adequate provision. Under his consulentship a band were gathered, who have recently felt themselves strong enough to have a Minister of their own. The Rev. G. O. Lloyd, son of our esteemed Minister at the Paarl, accepted a Call in 1937. Under his capable leadership the Church grew in numbers and influence. On his removal in 1939 to Bethesda Church at Port Elizabeth he was succeeded by the Rev. T. F. Blake.

### **Philipton and Blinkwater. (C.)**

The story of the Kat River Settlement belongs to the history of South Africa, rather than to the story of the Congregational Churches. But a brief reference is necessary. In 1830 Sir Andries Stockenstrom, always a man of generous impulses, led a band of Hottentots drawn chiefly from Bethelsdorp, Theopolis, the Baviaans River and Swagers Hoek, to form a settlement in the Kat River valley. A double purpose was intended. A multitude of dispossessed and landless people were to be given homes, and a barrier was to be erected against the frequent incursions of the Kaffir tribes. The first detachment consisted of 900 persons, of whom from two to two hundred and fifty were capable of bearing arms. They came with the enthusiasm of the children of Israel entering the land of Promise, and James Read came with



them. Three years later the population had risen to over two thousand. They had taken out water-furrows totaling twenty four miles in length, and their crops of wheat and barley were 2,300 muids. Then in 1834, only four years after their first settlement, came the first blow. A devastating war carried off all their stock and destroyed their homes. Undaunted, they returned. Mr. J. Rose Innes, the Government Inspector of schools, reported in 1839:—"In no part of the country have I seen cultivation carried on to such an extent. I was much struck by the neat appearance of many of the cottages.... It is one of the most interesting sights in South Africa.... In connection with Mr. Thomson's congregation there were two elementary schools, supported in part by a small grant from government, and in part by fees. In connection with the L.M.S. Church at Philipton there were twelve schools supported in part by the Society and in part by fees. The teachers were young Hottentot men who met twice a week to receive instruction from Mr. James Read Jr..... I speak in perfect sincerity when I say that I have seldom seen a more interesting body of young men.... They possess in an eminent degree the spirit and zeal of the teacher." Mrs. Philip, who accompanied her husband in a visit, speaks in like terms of the prosperity of the settlement, and especially of the work in the schools.

In 1844 the Government assessment placed the value of immovable property held by the people at £36,000, and the value of their live stock at £20,000. The road rate realised £300. The L.M.S. records shew that over £1,000 was contributed for religious and educational purposes. Then came the second shock,—the war of 1846-47, when their losses were estimated at £30,000. Nevertheless they persisted. But now a spirit of dissatisfaction became apparent. They felt they were not getting a square deal from the authorities. They had given the whole of their manhood to the defence of the Colony while the European farmers had been called upon for only small contingents; and when compensation was paid out for

losses sustained, the Europeans were paid at a far more generous rate. Then came the floods of 1848, and the crowning disaster, the war of 1850-51.

It is not part of this Story to attempt to analyse the conflicting reports on what has come to be known as the Kat River rebellion. It is certain that some of the settlers joined with the Kaffir hordes in their assault on European farms. It is equally certain that many remained loyal. James Read, who was in the midst of it, striving to inculcate reason and peace, says that of the 461 erf-holders 359 were definitely loyal. Many who joined the rebels, did so under compulsion. The Blinkwater was the most affected. Of the Philipton congregation and its many outstations, only three rebelled. Nevertheless the wrath of the European farmers of the frontier, both Dutch and English, blazed against all Missionaries, especially of the L.M.S., and in particular against the Kat River settlement. Many of the people were banished, many holdings were confiscated. The settlement never recovered. The fine spirit with which it had begun withered under the distrust and enmity of their European neighbours. Today the whole district, with the exception of a few holdings, has passed into European ownership.

The Church, once flourishing, has dwindled to a mere handful. Their first Minister was the Rev. James Read who served them from 1830 until his death in 1851. He was one of the great-hearts among the early pioneers. He came out to join van der Kemp in 1800, was engaged in Cape Town for a time, then at Bethelsdorp, then on the Orange River among the Griquas, and was the first to enter the Bechuana field along with Robert Hamilton in 1813. In 1815 he led a band across the Kat River in an attempt to reopen the work among the Ama Xosa. When he died, worn out with many labours, and broken-hearted at the disasters which had befallen his charges, he was buried near the Philipton Church in the shadow of the great mountains where he had so faithfully

laboured. His son, James Read Jr., who had been associated with his father from the commencement of the work, continued until he also was laid to rest in 1871. Since then the work has languished. There have been a number of short ministries, but only one calls for mention. The Rev. L. J. Thacker lived and worked among the people with his wife and family for eighteen years, from 1896 to 1913. It was a fine record of patience and perseverance in an attempt to save a sinking cause. During this time a new Mission House was built, and the schools were well maintained.

### **Kokstad. (C.)**

Kokstad has now a small place in our memories. It does not appear on our records, but its early history is closely associated with some of the best men on our rolls of service. The Kokstad Griqua Church is the early L.M.S. Church of Philippolis transplanted from the plains of the Free State to the uplands of Griqualand East. It is all a part, and no mean part, of South African history.

In a previous Chapter we have told something of the early beginnings of the Griqua Mission. We saw the Missionaries discovering the Griquas along the banks of the Orange River. When the Great Trek came it passed right through Griqua territory, especially that part of it which was under the Chieftainship of Adam Kok in what is now the Southern Free State. The Griquas were a pastoral people, who under Missionary leadership had attained a fair measure of civilization. They had defined farms, with neat homesteads, with here and there agricultural lands under water leadings. They had built Churches and schools. Their central town in this area was Philippolis with an excellent Church building and good schools. At first the Boers were travellers, passing on to lands further afield, but as time went on and the number of immigrants increased, there came those who looked with envious eyes on the fine farms and fountains occupied by the Griquas. There followed friction, and

political complications in which the British Government was concerned,—a long and painful story with at least one battle, at Boomplaats, a story which need not detain us here. We are concerned with the Great Griqua Trek.

In 1853 Edward Solomon was at Philippolis. He writes with a good deal of discouragement:—"The constant excitement and uncertainty regarding their political relationships have told upon our people.... The attendance at our chapel at Philippolis has been very fluctuating, and smaller than last year. The congregations have ranged from 200 to 600, though occasionally we have had full congregations of upwards of 800. The attendances at our schools have also been smaller." It is an old story, political excitement leading to social and spiritual disintegration. Three years later Solomon was succeeded by the Rev. W. B. Philip, son of Dr. Philip, after whom the town had been named. Things went from bad to worse. Philip was a student rather than a man of affairs. At last, on the advice and with the help of the Governor of the Cape, the Griquas decided to migrate to Nomansland beyond the Drakensberg. Farms were sold for what they would fetch, the Church and Mission property went for £3,000, and the whole clan accompanied by their Missionary, set out on the great adventure. It was the Great Trek of the Griquas. Their Missionary was a man of parts as was proved later at Queenstown and Cape Town, but he was not suited to lead a heterogeneous band of fugitives. He was neither a Moses nor a Joshua, rather was he akin to an Apostle John. At Hangklip in Basutoland, where the Trek halted to rest and refit, he left them. The rest of the journey was undertaken without the presence of a Missionary.

The number of trekkers who rested at Hangklip was about 2,000, and their possessions numbered 20,000 head of stock, large and small, and 300 waggons. William Dower gives a vivid account of the passage of the Drakensberg:—"After resting and waiting for the laggards they began the famous passage over Ongeluk's Nek. It was no child's play. Every morning scores of men set

out to work with pick and crowbar, hammer and drills, powder and fuse to dig out a passable track on the mountain side. Let any unprejudiced man visit the old Griqua pass.... and it ought to bespeak a bit of respect for the memory of those hardy pioneers, whatever may be the feeling towards their descendants today." This was in 1861 to 1862.

When they arrived in Nomansland, now East Griqualand, they found it a land of wide pastures with many flowing rivers. But it was a land unbroken to the plough. The rank grass proved fatal to their stock, which died by the score. Many were reduced to poverty. And it was cold, bitter cold, for it lies high and exposed to the Southern winds. Like the Israelites of old they mourned for the fleshpots of Egypt. And unlike the Israelites they had no leader, and no sufficient spiritual resources within themselves. A great depression settled upon them. Their spirit was broken, and it must be recorded with sorrow, it never recovered.

In 1869 the Rev. William Dower came to dwell among them. But the seven years had done their work. All that man could do to recover their manhood was done. Farms were allotted, a town was laid out, schools and Churches were built. The fine central Church in Kokstad was built out of what was left from the proceeds of the Philippolis property aided by the free labour of the people. No couple could have been more fitted for the task than Mr. and Mrs. Dower. Wise, patient, with a deep understanding of human needs, they wrought for thirty-two years. But all in vain. The people never recovered. The neat homesteads, which had been their pride in the old home land, were not built in the new conditions. The farms were not cultivated; their cattle were dead and they had no ploughs. When Europeans came flocking in on the lookout for bargains in land there was a stampede to sell. Farms, which today would be worth many thousands of pounds, were sold for a trifle, or exchanged for a waggon, a cart and horses, a case of whisky, a suit of clothes. So the Griqua Nation

went under, submerged under a flood of grievances, real and imagined. All that is left is a few names,—Griqualand East and Kokstad. Of landed property they still cling to the Church and Manse, remnants of a once promising past.

As the European population grew a Church was built for their use which still bears on the foundation stone the name "Congregational Church." It has long since become Presbyterian. When Dower accepted a Call to the fine work awaiting him at Port Elizabeth he was succeeded by the Rev. William Murray. Murray had grown old in the service of the Griquas under Dower's ministry. He was followed by the Rev. M. Richardson, who served for five years. But the Church and "Nation" were rent by divisions and the course was steadily down-hill. Every attempt of the Union to heal their diseases was met by assertions of independence. Today the few, who still meet in the fine old Church, conduct their affairs without the guidance of the Union.

### **The Kaffrarian Mission.**

The first attempt to bring the Gospel to the turbulent tribes beyond the Eastern frontier of the Colony ended in defeat, but not unto despair. (Part I, Section I). A young man, son of the Chief Tzatzoe, whose kraal was on the banks of the Buffalo River, had been impressed. He must have been a mere lad when he first came under van der Kemp's influence at his father's kraal. Restless, not knowing what he sought, he came to Bethelsdorp to learn more of the Word which leads to eternal life. James Read was deeply stirred. He had come to South Africa in 1800 to join his leader in the Kaffrarian Mission, and here was his chance. He accompanied Jan Tzatzoe on a mission to Gaika to ask of the great Chief facilities to reopen the Mission. The story is one of the vivid sidelights on the spirit of the times. The Directors in London, hearing of the opening door, sent out the Rev. Joseph Williams. Read accompanied him to the fords of the

Fish River at Cook House, where by arrangement fires were kindled on the adjoining hills to announce their presence, and to enquire if the way was open. When they saw the answering fires they crossed the river with glad hearts. This was in 1815. It was the second invasion. A Mission was established on the banks of the Kat River, a few miles to the North of the present town of Fort Beaufort. There Williams lived with his young wife, doing the work of Evangelism, until his death two years later. The remains of the house they built and the water furrow they took out may still be seen.

When the Directors heard of the tragic ending of their hopes they were undismayed. They had put their hands to the plough and were not to be turned back. In 1817 two young men arrived in Cape Town, Robert Moffat for the Northern field, and John Brownlee for Kaffraria. Under God Brownlee became the father of all Missions, of all denominations, to the tribes of Kaffraria. His first station was at the Gwali near the present town of Alice. Here he was joined by two other Scotchmen, Thomson and Bennie. This Mission was subsequently transferred to the Scotch Mission out of which grew the Lovedale Institution. In 1818 Brownlee accepted a post as Government agent, but not for long. In 1826, at the urgent request of Dr. Philip, he settled at the Buffalo River with Jan Tzatzoe as his assistant.

The first half century on the Eastern frontier was a constant succession of recurring wars. The story of the Mission is one of advance and retreat, and again advance. Throughout these turbulent years Brownlee was the leader, and with him were F. G. Kayser, and later Richard Birt. As time passed other Societies came into the field, the Presbyterian, the Methodist and the Anglican. The field became one of the most congested Missionary fields in the world. The L.M.S., true to its principle that its commission was to the unprivileged and neglected, turned its attention elsewhere. The first to enter, it was the



first to leave to others such honours as belong to the days of peace and prosperity. The stations they had occupied in the early years remain as our Churches in Kaffraria.

### **The Brownlee Mission. (N.)**

Near where the town of King Williamstown now stands was the kraal of Jan Tzatzoe's father. Here Brownlee, then thirty-five years of age, built his house and established his Church. This was in 1826. With Jan Tzatzoe as comrade he toured the neighbouring country preaching, pleading, exhorting, expostulating,—seeking ever to bring the Gospel of Peace to minds darkened by warlike passion. The Amaxosa are a proud race, and the lands were theirs on which the white man was ever encroaching. They felt themselves the equals of the White man, though in their secret hearts they must have known that the assegai cannot resist the gun. It was unpromising soil in which to sow the seed of the Gospel. Twice in the wars the Mission House and Church were burnt down, the first time in 1835, when the Missionary and his family were compelled to flee for their lives. But there were sixteen converts who remained true through all their fiery trials. The Church was rebuilt, only to be again destroyed in the war of 1846. Then a permanent military occupation brought more peaceful times. The Mission site was transferred to the military, and the new Church built on the present site. There followed some twenty years of peaceful progress. As Europeans came to settle in the district and the town of King Williamstown grew, Brownlee gave to all, Europeans and Natives alike, his affectionate interest. In 1867 the whole community joined in the celebration of the veteran Missionary's Jubilee. He died in 1871. The Rev. James Chalmers said of him,—“He was one of the grandest, simplest, most patient of men, one of the truest, most honourable and accomplished of Missionaries; a giant in stature, brave as Paul, and tender hearted as a child; generous, unselfish, hospitable, one of the benefactors of South Africa.”

In 1867 the Rev. John Harper came to be assistant and successor. He served the growing work with fidelity for forty-eight years. He retired in 1916. Harper was not built on the heroic model of Brownlee, but he had a like patience in service, and an equal love of the people and devotion to the Gospel. When he retired, the Church,—no longer ranking as a Mission,—had for the first time in its long history of close on a hundred years, to extend a Call to a Minister. There are two crises in the evolution by which a Mission becomes a Church. The first is when it assumes responsibility for its own maintenance, and the second when it must Call its first Minister. A Call was sent by a substantial majority to the Rev. M. H. Wilson, who accepted, and came into residence. The minority refused to honour the Call, and carried their protest to the courts. The Call was upheld, but for many years the rancour of strife continued to trouble the life of the Church. Wilson was one of the most lovable and peace-loving of men. He loved the people and lived for their interests. As it was said of Brownlee that he was as brave as Paul, so it may be said of Wilson that he had the disposition of a John. Gradually, though with much mental pain which at times gravely threatened his health, he won his way. When he died in 1935, after a ministry of nearly twenty years, the whole town, both European and Native, mourned the passing of a beloved and faithful servant of Jesus Christ. He was followed by the Rev. D. Tolmie Fraser.

### **Knapps Hope. (N.)**

In 1827 there arrived in Cape Town the Rev. F. G. Kayser. He was of German birth, a graduate of Berlin University, and a member of the Lutheran Church. After a short time with Brownlee, he went to open a new station on the banks of the Keiskamma River, some forty miles nearer the Cape boundary. In 1836 he removed up the river to the present site which he called Knapps Hope after his favourite professor in the Leipsic University.

The Mission has had a chequered history. When founded it was surrounded by an immense population; today it is surrounded by European farms. Twice it was burnt to the ground in the wars. Kayser was a man of undaunted courage and determination. When war with Macomo was imminent he visited the Chief in his kraal, going alone and unarmed in a vain attempt to persuade him to ways of peace. During the war which followed the first burning of the Mission occurred. Returning he rebuilt his home and Church, only to see them again destroyed in the wars of 1850 to 51. The story of his attempt to save the work is vividly told by one of our Native Ministers, the Rev. I. Wauchope, who puts it in the words of old Gonco, one of the actors. As the narrative reveals how these events appeared in the eyes of a Native of eighty years ago, we quote some paragraphs from the vivid story:—"Our Missionary called us together and told us what was going. He warned us against taking part. At this time, Namba, a son of the great Macomo was recognised as protector of the Missionary. A great meeting was called by the Governor, Sir Harry Smith, which our Missionary and Mr. Birt of Peelton, and many others, attended. The Chief Sandili was ordered to come, but refused. This meant war. Mr. Kayser sent his wife and family into Alice, but remained at his post with his son Fred." The story then relates how Gonco and Namba hid the Missionary on planks laid across the rafters which supported the roof, and how next morning the Missionary was conducted into Alice. "We came in sight of Alice. One of us said, There comes Pokies, Namba's horse, and in a few seconds Raliho, a brother of Namba, came up to us leading the Chief's horse. And when we came within fifty yards of the British camp at Fort Hare and saw them waving their handkerchiefs to welcome Mr. Kayser, Namba jumped on his horse and raced away back to join the enemy. Mr. Kayser stood looking after him in dismay.... There was an instance of a young Kaffir Chief who had done a noble act, running away from his reward. It was an act of Kaffir patriotism."

When the war was over Kayser returned, rebuilt house and Church, and continued at his post until his death in 1868. It was a long period of earnest, active work, essentially that of a pioneer, marked by courage, endurance, and a patience that would not be denied. He was succeeded by his son, the Rev. Frederick Kayser.

Fred Kayser, as he was familiarly called, was born at Knapps Hope. He studied at Hankey under the Rev. T. Durant Philip, and was engaged as a schoolmaster at Knapps Hope in 1849. When his father retired he was ordained to the full charge, which he retained until 1884. He was succeeded by his brother, the Rev. Henry Kayser, who served from 1890 to 1897. Thus three generations of Kayzers were at Knapps Hope, a long period of some sixty years. The next Minister was the Rev. Isaac Wauchope (1899 to 1908). Wauchope was a student at Lovedale, where he distinguished himself as an able and earnest young man. When Dr. Stewart, the Principal, went on a tour of Nyassaland to open the way for the Scotch Mission, he was selected as companion.

In its palmy days Knapps Hope was a great Mission, with a wide field of outstations, of which Fort Beaufort was chief. The substantial buildings, Church, school and Mission House are evidence of its former greatness. To-day it is but a shadow of its former self with a membership of less than 100. When Wauchope left to take charge of Fort Beaufort as a separate Church, it was placed under the charge of the Minister of King Williamstown. For a short time it had as Minister the Rev. P. N'Konyakazi. It is now once more worked as a branch of the King Williamstown Church.

#### **Fort Beaufort. (N. & C.)**

Lovely for situation, with the Kat River circling it on three sides, Fort Beaufort was at first a military post on the frontier of the Cape Colony. Near by are the ruins of the Mission where the Rev. J. Williams made his heroic attempt to open Christian work among the wild

Ama Xosa tribes in 1813,—the first established Mission beyond the Fish River. When he died after two brief years the work was abandoned. In 1853 the Rev. J. Gill came as Missionary to the troops and the Native inhabitants of the neighbourhood. In 1868 he was succeeded by the Rev. F. Dorrington. Out of the work thus begun among the soldiers grew the present Presbyterian Church for Europeans, and the Native and Coloured work which is associated with us. At first the Native and Coloured people worked together as one Church with a wide field of outstations, including Lower Blinkwater. The Rev. A. van Rooyen was in charge from 1878 to 1880, and was succeeded by his son, the Rev. J. van Rooyen. From 1892 to 1907 the Rev. I. Wauchope was Minister. The mixed congregation gave constant trouble. The only way in which a Church of mixed nationalities can succeed is when the Minister is European. The van Rooyens were Coloured, Wauchope was Native. The two races have now been separated, making two small Churches. There is a nice property, and there are a considerable number of small outstations. T. Fetsha (a student) is in charge of the Native Church, and Pastor Erasmus of the Coloured.

### Peelton. (N.)

About forty miles from East London, on the main line running North to Johannesburg, the traveller may look out upon a cluster of white houses nestling among trees and widespread gardens, with a tall Church in their midst. He may think this a European village. It is the Native township of Peelton. No Mission in all South Africa has a more romantic history. It was founded in the days when all the land was shrouded in heathen darkness with only Brownlee on the Buffalo River and Kayser at Knapps Hope. In 1836 Dr. Philip went to England taking with him the young Native chief Jan Tzatzoe, whom we have already met as a boy seeking the help of van der Kemp at Bethelsdorp, and later pleading

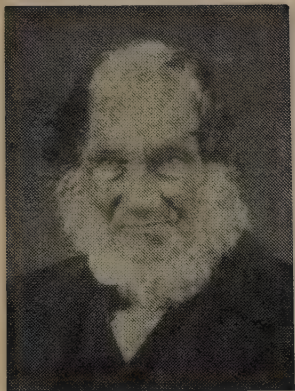
with the Chief Gaika for permission to establish a Mission among his people. He is now a member of Brownlee's Church, and an Evangelist. He goes to England as an exhibit, that the Churches there may see the fine product of their African Missions. In England he met a young student, a member of the famous Weigh House Church, Richard Birt. Impressed by the grave demeanour and ardent appeals of the African, the young man offered for Missionary service. This was Richard Birt's "Call." God had spoken to him through the lips of an African.

Two years passed, and Birt arrived in Africa to begin work at Uxelo, not far from Fort Beaufort. There was a charm about the man, and a passion. His success in winning the affection and conversion of the heathen was apostolic. As in the days of the early Church men and women flocked to his standard. And also, like the Apostles of old, he lived among perils and persecutions. He was in the storm centre of the "War of the Axe" of 1846. His station was destroyed and all he possessed. With a band of converts he took shelter in Fort Beaufort. There, amid the excitements of military operations, he ceased not to preach the Gospel of God's love. When the war was over, he set out with his band of converts to seek for a place of God's appointing. An old Deacon of Brownlee, Ntuse by name, described a valley where the rich soil made "the pumpkins jump out of the ground." It was ten miles distant from his friend Brownlee. Here he established his Mission, naming it after Sir Robert Peel, the famous English statesman. Two years later, in 1850, war again swept the land. The story is vividly told by John Harper. The Missionary with his wife and little children were about to sit down to their Christmas dinner when the war cry was heard, and the hills were seen to be red with the warriors on the war path. The dinner was left as it stood. The waggon was inspanned, and with such few things as could be hastily loaded the party set off for King Williamstown. With them went a band of converts.

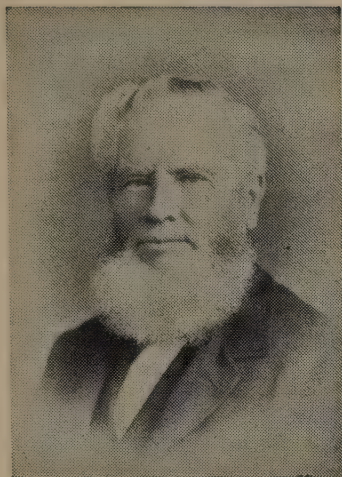
When peace returned, Birt was back to rebuild and carry on. And now the wisdom of the chosen site was seen. The tribes to the West, round about the Kat and Keiskamma Rivers, had been driven back, and were established all about the new station. Birt found himself in the midst of a teeming population among whom he laboured with the zeal of a man inspired. He planned and built a great Church, with high walls and Gothic windows, with a capacity of over a thousand people. It is still known as the Cathedral of Kaffraria. With his zeal was combined great administrative ability. The village was laid out in orderly plots, and the people were taught to emulate their Missionary in the planting of trees and crops. He was an enthusiast for education. His schools became famous, a boarding school for girls and another for boys. When his pupils had absorbed all the station could teach, they were encouraged to go to Lovedale for the highest standards then available for Native people. Among these was a young man named Walter Rubusana, who had been his stable boy, went to Lovedale, was educated for the Ministry, and returned to be his assistant.

Birt had great fame as a healer of the sick. He had an elementary knowledge of medicine, and was reputed to have the healing hand. It was no uncommon thing to see waggons outspanned for weeks at a time while their occupants, both European and Native, sought the aid of the Missionary for their sick. He had an excellent knowledge of the Xosa language, which he used to perfect the Xosa Bible and Hymn book. His discipline was excellent, his weapon not sternness but love. Throughout his ministry the good order and honesty of the Peelton people were known throughout the surrounding country. His enduring monument was the multitude of souls he brought to accept Christ as their living Saviour. In all his labours he was ably seconded by a devoted wife. Mrs. Birt was of South African birth, a daughter of Robert Hart of Somerset East. Their services were brought to





Rev. JOHN BROWNLEE.



Rev. RICHARD BIRT.



BROWNLEE CHURCH AND SCHOOL.



an end only by death. He died at his post in 1892 at the ripe age of 81.

The next Minister was the Rev. M. H. Wilson, who had two periods of service, from 1893 to 1903, and from 1907 to 1916. His was a gentle spirit, the savour of whose influence is still remembered by the older people. He had many difficulties. The people had never known what it was to have a say in the election of their Minister, and there were both intrigue and division. Some wanted their assistant Minister, the Rev. W. B. Rubusana, others wanted a European. The Union came to the rescue with a compromise. The work was divided, Rubusana going to the outstation at East London in full charge, and Wilson came to Peelson. The settlement of a resident Minister at the rising port was certainly right, but the severance of a considerable portion of the country work was unwise. It crippled the parent Church, and dissipated the energies of the man appointed to East London. The people were no longer rich in cattle as in former days, and by the compromise their numbers were greatly depleted. Some of the Outstations granted to East London were beyond Peelson, Rubusana having to pass through Peelson to reach them. This led to a continuance of friction. But Wilson was not the man to abandon his work because it was hard. When there was lack of pence he and his wife did with fewer necessities, and when the storms of controversy raged he found peace within the sanctuary of his soul. To every buffet he opposed the invincible shield of a loving heart. He knew the hardest of all Christian-conflict, the overcoming of evil by non-resistance. For a short period, 1903 to 1906, he was at Hackney, but he was glad to return. During his absence his place was taken by the Rev. T. Loose. In Wilson's first period the girls' boarding school was continued with Miss Blunt in charge, and on his return an attempt was made to continue with Miss Morrison as teacher. The financial responsibility proving too great, the school was reluctantly closed, to become just a station school of the better class, under capable Native teachers.

The Rev. H. K. N'dobe succeeded to the Ministry in 1918 and continued to his death in 1932. The membership is now about 250, and there is a Sunday School with 150 scholars. Pastor F. Briggs is in charge.

### **East London. (N.)**

Before the advent of the railway the port of East London, where the Buffalo River enters the sea, was little used. There was no city, merely a cluster of houses, with the usual Location. It was an Outstation of Peulton. As the port grew it became evident that the needs were more than could be supplied from the inland Church forty miles away. The Rev. W. B. Rubusana undertook the task of establishing an independent Church. In our story of Peulton we have told how this was the result of a compromise. To give the new venture adequate financial backing, many of the Outstations of Peulton were attached to the new venture. But financial backing implies service, and East London was growing too rapidly to admit of the constant absence of its Minister. Perhaps this is the explanation of the disappointments associated with the Church.

Rubusana was an able man, and by no means lacking in energy. He travelled much. Twice he visited Europe, and on one occasion extended his journey to America. He was ambitious for his people. On platform and in pulpit, in England and America, he pleaded their cause, returning with some few hundred pounds for his Church, and from America with the title of Doctor of Philosophy. His energy and eloquence gave him undoubted ascendancy among his people, and in the councils of the Union. He was elected to a seat in the Cape Provincial Parliament, the only one of his race to attain such honour. He was a member of a joint Committee of the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches for the revision of the Xosa Hymn Book. He had a long period of service, no less than fifty-two years, and no man has had a better backing from his own people, and from his European associates. Yet there is a tragic note of failure over his

life. It is not out of place to say that his insistence on right and privilege rather than on duty, more especially the duty of a blameless life, crippled his influence. A Church building seated for 500, and a Mission House, on sites granted by the Municipality of East London, and a number of smaller Churches and schools in town and country, are the material monument of his memory.

### **Hackney. (N.)**

On the high uplands above the Katberg pass is a large Native settlement placed there in the thirties of last century after one of the many wars. The Rev. James Read was their first Missionary. Read's main station was at Philipton, at the foot of the pass. The ride across the mountains is no small venture, but the early Missionaries regarded obstacles as a challenge to endurance. Any time after 1838 we may picture the Missionary, now grown grey in service, riding the hills, his chief luggage a Bible and Hymn Book. Also we may think of his son, James Read Jr., now an ordained Minister of two years standing, accompanying his father, learning from him the cheerful courage that makes labour a delight. Under their tutelage a substantial Church was built, with Mission House adjoining. Surely the shelter of the house was needed, for the winds across the mountains blow shrewdly.

The first settled Minister we have on our records is the Rev. T. G. Jones, a hardy Welshman, with rugged features, who would be at home among the hills. He came in 1881 and served with marked devotion until his death in 1900. Mrs. Jones was a daughter of James Read, thus maintaining the earlier association of the Church with its founder.

When Jones died, a Call was sent to the Rev. J. R. F. Pledger, then at Port Elizabeth. Pledger was an earnest man, with the root of the Gospel in him, but in one respect unsuited to the work of the Mission field. He lacked the grace of patience. Impulsive in thought as

in action, he failed to follow the slower movement of the Native mind. The result was the beginning of trouble from which the Church suffered for many a long year. He was followed by the Rev. M. H. Wilson of Peelton. It was thought that Wilson's experience, and his known understanding of the Native way of looking at life, would be a healing influence. But Wilson had family responsibilities which rendered his stay in the isolation of Hackney impossible. He was followed by the Rev. E. Palmer Jones. Palmer Jones and his wife were peculiarly fitted for such a post. Stalwart in spirit as in body, they faced their task with a resolution which knows no defeat. For thirteen years the Church enjoyed a period of peaceful progress, the membership growing in numbers and in the knowledge and obedience of the Gospel, and the children in the schools finding an ever ready and sympathetic friend. One result was that three of the young men went to Lovedale to study for the Ministry. When in 1920 increasing age and deafness led to Palmer Jones' retirement, he was followed by one of these young men, the Rev. Charles M'nyengeza. He began his ministry in 1921 and is still in office. There have been troubles, almost inevitable when a Minister serves a Church where he grew up as a boy. But the long period of service is a tribute to the persistence of the Minister. Isolation is a hard handicap for a Native Minister among his own people. The returns shew a membership of over 400, and a Sunday School of over 200 children with eight teachers.

### **The Transkei.**

The Church in Tembuland, sometimes called Solomons Vale, and more often just the Transkei, is another Church we owe to the Read family. What a fine record this family has. Ever a pioneer, Read was the first Missionary at the Kat River settlement, where he found a settled home from 1829 until his death in 1851. His son, James Read Jr., worked in the Kat River for half a century, helped his father in the work at Hackney, and in 1876 went on a tour to Tembuland where he founded the work.

Tembuland lies deep within the Transkei, some forty miles to the North of the present town of Idutywa. It is isolated now, but was much more isolated in the seventies. The first settled Minister was the Rev. S. P. Sihlali. Sihlali was a Graaff Reinet boy, where in 1880 he was employed as a schoolmaster under the Rev. T. Durant Philip. He studied for the Ministry at Lovedale, and his first and only charge was in Tembuland. Among our Native Ministers he stands in the first rank for his ability, devotion and industry. His death at his post in 1919 at the ripe age of seventy years was a real loss to the spiritual forces dedicated to the advancement of our Native people. He served a wide field. Today there are no less than sixteen Outstations, most of which owe their beginnings to his energy. He visited England in the interests of the work, and with the money resulting from his appeals, built a fine stone Church at the central station.

There were divisions during his time which have persisted. Here, as at Hackney, isolation is a heavy handicap for a Native Minister. For a short time the Rev. Martin Dower lived at Solomon's Vale, taking charge of the work, and serving in addition as Moderator for all our Native Churches. This was an attempt to break down the isolation which, unfortunately, could not be continued for lack of funds. In 1925 the Rev. S. S. M'bangela began a Ministry which still continues. He is one of the Ministers we owe to the ministry of Palmer Jones at Hackney. There is a staff of fifty lay preachers, employed in the widely scattered work. The membership is given at 500, with 800 adherents.



## IV.—THE CHURCHES OF THE NATAL DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

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Congregationalism made its first contact with Natal when the Missionaries of the American Board arrived in 1835. As at the Cape, so also in the sister Colony, our roots are deep in Missionary service and sacrifice. It is not possible to estimate the contribution made by the American Missionaries to South African national life. They came when the land was rent by war and rapine. It was the time of the Great Trek, the massacre of Piet Retief, Dick King's ride, and the attempt to rule the Boers of Maritzburg under the Union Jack. Amid these stirring events the Missionaries established themselves, often defeated but ever returning, for they served under a banner that can never know retreat. They were great men, with wives of like calibre, and their successors have maintained the tradition of scholarship, Christian fortitude and public service. Their material contributions are in such educational Institutions as Adams and Inanda, the McCord Hospital at Durban and the Bridgeman Hospital of Johannesburg, and in the Churches and schools established throughout wide areas in Natal and Zululand, on the Rand, and in Portuguese East Africa. To such visible things must be added the incalculable contribution of spiritual guidance and uplift. Like many another band of Missionaries in this as in other lands, they have been a city set on a hill which cannot be hid.

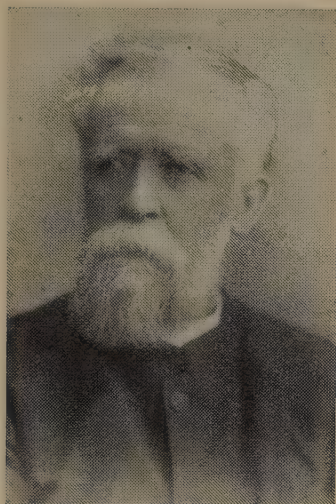
### The Congregational Churches of Durban. (E.)

Congregational Church life both in Durban and Maritzburg began in the traditional Congregational manner. No Minister summoned them, they gathered themselves. In 1851 a little band of men and women, whose hearts God had touched, resolved to form themselves into a Church in Durban. They met in a room provided by Ralph Clarence. Thirteen persons enrolled themselves

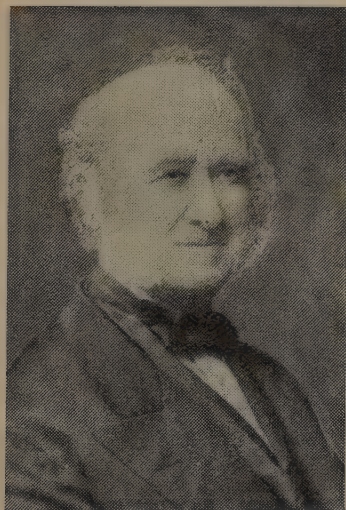
# SOME LEADERS OF CHURCH LIFE IN THE NATAL DISTRICT.



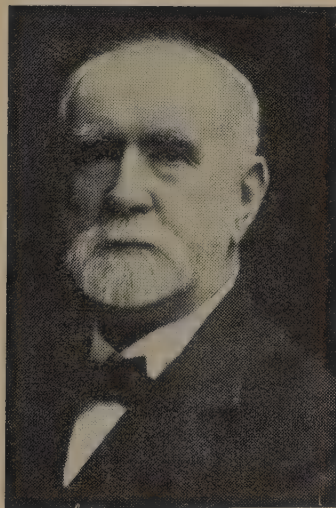
Rev. W. H. MANN.



Rev. JOHN FERNIE.



Mr. P. LENNOX.



Sir DAVID HUNTER, K.C.B.



as Foundation Members. They chose one of their number, James Grosvenor, a school-master, to be their Minister, for whom they sought ordination at the hands of the Rev. David Lindley of the American Mission. We can picture the scene. The house of Ralph Clarence was a long, low, wattle-and-daub building, overshadowed by a huge wild fig tree on the Beach erf No. 19 in Smith Street. Round about were the sand dunes and the African bush, near by the streets, as yet unpaved, of the rising city, and beyond the Bay, the Bluff and the waters of the Indian Ocean. Here these exiles, already at home in their adopted country, had their Holy of Holies. Here for four years they continued in faithful fellowship while their numbers grew. Then on the 27th of June, 1855, Alfred Walter Evans, one of the Deacons, laid the foundation stone of a new house of worship on a site in Smith Street. Before its completion James Grosvenor resigned and returned to England. The opening services were conducted by the Rev. Lewis Grout, who is described as preeminently the scholar of the American Mission.

For the next two years the Church was without a Minister, the Deacons continuing the services with such occasional help as the Missionaries could afford. In October 1857 the Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys arrived to undertake the pastorate. He was a man of much devotion, who in later life became the first Secretary of CUSA and the founder of our Church at Uitenhage. He was succeeded in 1864 by the Rev. W. H. Mann, whose long and faithful ministry was the formative period in the history of the Durban Churches, and of the Congregational Churches throughout Natal. We can best describe the man, and the quality of the Church life in Mr. Mann's own words:

"This first Church building was that to which I was introduced on the first Sunday morning of July 1864. The building was indeed a contrast to the one we had left at Blackburn. But the Church was filled. Many were devoted to the Lord and to His cause..... The small Chapel was the scene of the labours of a

band of Christian men whose influence for good was felt on every hand. It was a central place, whence men went forth,—to Pinetown, to Clare, to Sydenham, to Isipingo, to Umbilo, and to the new suburb of the Berea,—men of God, who as Christian laymen exercised true ministries to our God and for His Christ. I must also add that, for the strengthening and extension of the outside work, there came to our side the Rev. John Fernie, whose efforts were greatly blessed. This early period of our Church history was hallowed by a large measure of peace and prosperity which fell upon us as the blessing of the Lord in answer to the prayers of His people."

Sir David Hunter gives us a picture of the men who thus served as the builders of Church life throughout the rising city. "J. C. Adams, a school-master, an earnest, unobtrusive gentleman, to whose kindness and ability many were indebted. Joseph Fleetwood Churchill, a fine type of the cultured Christian gentleman, who adorned a sphere in the religious and social life of the community. Peter Lennox, a true Scot, retaining all the characteristics of his race, one of the most beautiful spirits. Richard Webber Tysack, a warm-hearted impulsive Englishman, full of zeal in every good work, keeping to the end of a long life the freshness and enthusiasm of youth. William Gardner, a faithful member, never absent, of brusque exterior, but with the tender-heartedness of a woman. Robert Winter Evans, my personal friend of many years, with whom we were long associated in the Sunday School. These all died in the faith, their memory a precious heritage of the Church."

For fifteen years the Church continued in its first building until the time was ripe for extension. It was decided to build a new Church on the same site. To accommodate the congregation a room was engaged in a store at the corner of Mark Lane, while the building was taken down stone by stone, and the materials used to build a school room in Mercury Lane. Mr. Mann says:

"On the afternoon of February 16th, 1870, the new school room was opened by our beloved Superintendent, Alfred Winter Evans..... More than a generation of boys and girls have reason to bless God for the loving instructions implanted in the Mercury Lane School Room, and many a home has been made brighter and holier by the stirring and socially uplifting appeals that have sought to reclaim the drunkard, and call the wanderer home." The new Church was opened and dedicated on the 7th December, 1870, the preachers being the Rev. Herman Wilder of the American Board and the Rev. James Cameron from the L.M.S. Mission to Madagascar.

The Church thus dedicated served the needs of the congregation for thirty-three years. Mr. Mann retired in 1900, after thirty six years of singularly devoted and successful work. The Lord was with him. He continued to live in Durban with his beloved wife, their home remaining a rallying centre, and a place of pilgrimage for all Christian people of Durban, and from afar. He was succeeded by the Rev. Arthur May, who remained for four years. In 1898 it was decided to sell the Smith Street property should opportunity arise, but it was not until 1901 that the sale was effected, the congregation retaining the use of the property for two years. A school-room was erected on the site of the old Manse in Aliwal Street, where it was proposed to hold services for a time as a feeler, to discover the suitability of the situation. The increased attendances led to the commencement of the new building forthwith. The foundation stone was laid on the 8th of April 1903 by Sir David Hunter, at which ceremony the Rev. W. H. Mann gave an account of the early days from which the above quotations are taken. The building was dedicated at the end of February 1904. Very proudly a correspondent in the "Congregationalist" describes it as the Cathedral of Durban, quoting a remark made by one of the Deacons that it is the finest building of its kind in Natal.

Shortly after the opening, May closed his ministry, and was succeeded by the Rev. J. G. Aldridge from 1905



to 1909. Then came the ministry of the Rev. John Sinclair from 1909 to 1913, to be followed by the Rev. J. H. Glover, whose long ministry is cherished by Natal Congregationalists as in line with the early traditions of the Church. The membership is now 168, and there is a Sunday School with 80 scholars and nine teachers.

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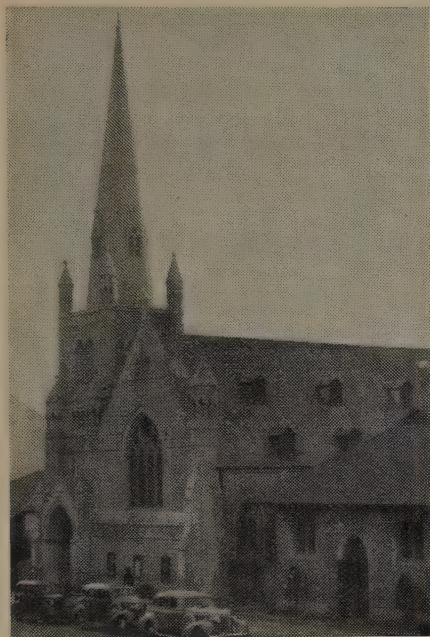
From the early days the members of the Smith Street Church were mindful of the needs of those living far afield, in what were then scattered villages. To meet this need the Rev. John Fernie came from England in 1867 as assistant Minister. After some eighteen months Fernie returned to England with throat trouble. But the memory of his influence remained. In 1876 he returned to be co-pastor with Mann for the long period of twenty one years. In addition the Church had the services of a considerable number of lay preachers, for whom a transport fund for the hire of horses was instituted. Roads in those days were often sandy tracks with hard going.

A word must be said about these early efforts of Church extension. As at the Cape, so in Natal, our Church fathers were not denominationally minded. They went among men as those who would witness for Christ, with small thought of denomination. All round about Durban little groups of Christian people were gathered, to whom the preachers from Smith Street ministered as they were able. Some of these groups grew into Churches of our order, while others died out, or were absorbed into some other denomination. Thus such places as Pinelands, Isipingo, Westville, Umkomaas and others no longer appear on our records.

### Sydenham. (E.)

The first Church to emerge from these early efforts was in the Northern village of Sydenham. In 1855 Ralph Clarence gave a plot of ground on the Clare estate on which a small building was erected, apparently for all purposes of the growing community. Here the preachers





ALIWAL STREET CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH, DURBAN.



PEARSON STREET CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND  
MACKINTOSH HALL, PORT EILZABETH.



from Smith Street conducted worship on the Sunday mornings, giving place to the Anglicans in the afternoons, and to the Methodists in the evenings. Out of these services our Church was born. On the 3rd of July 1861 a company of like minded people, men and women whose hearts God had touched, put their names to a Communion Roll, and invited the Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys to give them Communion. So organised Church life began in Sydenham. Names that have come down to us are D. Sparks, G. Spearman, J. Keal, Mr. and Mrs. Baker, and Mrs. Edwards. As yet they were without a Minister, and also, it would appear, having only a part right in the little wood and iron building, which in 1863 was removed to Sydenham. But when in 1867 Fernie came to work along with Mann in the ministry of the rapidly expanding city, they put up a wood-and-iron building of their own, in which they continued to worship for twenty-six happy years. When Fernie left after eighteen months the work continued. Reports tell of full congregations and much activity. Those were peaceful days, when men made the House of God central to their lives. In 1876 Mann, being in England on furlough, called on his friend Fernie, now a married man with three children, to tell him of the happy memories of his brief ministry, and to invite his return. Fernie returned, and for the next twenty-one years led the little community by the still waters of happy spiritual life. These two, Mann and Fernie, were as brothers in affection, and co-workers in the Master's service. In 1890 they were joined by the Rev. J. W. Boden, who came to take charge at Musgrave Road.

In 1897 Fernie removed to Maritzburg, but as in earlier days, the Church carried on without a settled pastorate. The work grew. In 1903 the old wood-and-iron building gave place to the present substantial Church. It is a fine structure of brick and stucco, surmounted by a spire. J. W. Sparks, the Senior Deacon, was the architect and clerk of works. He and his wife and son gave the spire. H. Sparks and J. Sparks each donated £100, and Smith Street contributed £350. The

rostrum, windows and fittings came from the old Smith Street Church. The seating accommodation is 200. Times have changed since those prosperous days. Sydenham has become largely Coloured and Indian, most of the families associated with the Church having removed. But there remains a faithful remnant whose loyalty and love are memorials of the good days of long ago. It may be that such loyalty will be rewarded. The city corporation has acquired a neighbouring estate for European settlement. We are privileged to pray that the walls of Sydenham, like Jerusalem after the exile, may once again hear the songs of the multitudes who make holy day.

### **Umbilo. (E.)**

Just outside the old borough boundary on the Durban side of the Umbilo River, near where it enters the Bay, is the suburb of Umbilo. Here in 1869 were the homes of a few Christian families hidden among the primeval bush. Some names are Bottomley, Whitaker, Steele, Smith and Forrest. They put up a small wattle-and-daub building, where services were held by the preachers from Smith Street. When the railway came, the neighbouring district, known as South Coast Junction, overshadowed the little community in population and importance. A site was purchased in 1867, where for a number of years services were held conjointly with the Methodists. This not proving satisfactory, the site and building were sold, and a new site purchased in Umbilo, where a wood-and-iron building to seat 140 was dedicated on November 16th, 1902, the preachers being the Rev. A. May of Aliwal Street, and the Rev. E. K. Hotchkiss of Bellair. But the event of the day was the afternoon Sunday School service conducted by J. W. Chesterton.

The Church has grown steadily with the growth of the district. From 1900 to 1906 it was joined with Bellair, sharing the ministry of E. K. Hotchkiss and J. Richardson. From 1906 it shared with Sea View the ministry of A. T. Cadoux (1906-1908), and of W. E.

Robertson (1908-1911). It then became a branch of Florida Road from 1911 to 1919. From 1919 to 1923 it had as its Minister J. Richardson. Then for a short period it was associated with Bellair and Sea View in the hope of securing a second Minister for all the Southern suburbs. This not proving practicable it again became independent under the Consulentship of the Minister of Aliwal Street. Writing in 1934 Mr. W. T. Mann speaks of it as one of the most vigorous of the Churches, with good congregations and one of the largest Sunday Schools, and a new building recently erected to seat 250, of a type worthy of the denomination.

### **Musgrave Road. (E.)**

Musgrave Road has proved the most robust of the many daughters of Smith Street. The Church was constituted as a separate Communion on August 26th, 1898. Prior to that the members had been on the Smith Street roll, but as early as 1887 there had been separate Church meetings, and a separate Diaconate. The Church grew out of the Sunday School. In 1863 the Sunday School teachers, under the leadership of Andrew Curle, put up a wood-and-iron building on a site which is now the lower St. Thomas' Road. The cost was £200. Here a branch Sunday School, known as the Red Hill school, was conducted, the Minister of Smith Street being the Rev. G. Y. Jeffreys. In 1878 the present commanding site at the corner of the Berea and Musgrave Roads was acquired. Here in 1880 a wood-and-iron building, imported from England at a cost of £1,000, was erected to which the Sunday School and preaching services were transferred. Two years later the Rev. J. W. Boden came as assistant Minister to Smith Street, with residence on the Berea. Again two years passed, and then came a brick building to take the place of the wood-and-iron structure, which was subsequently sold to the American Board to become the first Beatrice Street Church of the Zulu Mission.

Boden closed his ministry in 1898 and was succeeded by the Rev. John Cottingham (1899 to 1906). He was the first Minister to be called by the Church, Boden having ranked as assistant to Mann. Under him the Church prospered. The membership rose from 35 to 69, and the revenue was doubled. When at the close of the century CUSA appealed to all Churches to mark the occasion by special efforts, the Church resolved to aim at £2,000 for structural alterations and a Manse. £800 was immediately raised, and the Manse built. The structural alterations came later at the close of Cottingham's ministry in anticipation of the coming of Pedr Williams. Cottingham closed his ministry in 1906, feeling that the growing needs of the Church required the services of a younger man. He was much beloved. He was a man of sound judgment with a statesman's outlook, a good preacher and a fine pastor. Aldridge in a memorial sermon describes him as "A great Englishman, but foremost a great preacher of the love of God in Christ Jesus." Quoting Emerson he said, "He had a secret vigour and a pulse like a cannon."

The Rev. Pedr Williams succeeded with a ministry of ten years (1906 to 1916). He came with a great reputation as a preacher. He was of the Parker school, massive, sonorous, with an appeal to both head and heart. In anticipation of his coming the Church was enlarged by the addition of two wings. He was followed by the Rev. George Walker (1917 to 1923). He began his ministry amid the stress of the closing years of the great war, and right well did he lead his people by the quiet streams of courage and comfort. In 1921 a school-hall was dedicated as a war memorial. In 1923 the Rev. J. Harsum Taylor began a ministry which happily still continues. The Church has a membership of 140 and a Sunday School enrolment of 120.

### **Florida Road. (E.)**

Florida Road now ranks as second only to Musgrave Road among the daughter Churches of Smith Street.



Originally a preaching station, it was constituted a separate Church in March 1895. In the "Congregationalist" of November 1897 we read,—“for the past two years a small room has been used for all purposes, but the growing needs of the Church, and the stimulus given by the settlement of the Rev. W. Kenning, have induced them to build a more commodious place.” There follows an account of the laying of the foundation stone on October 23rd, 1897, by Mr. Bennet, of a School-Church, capable of seating 200. The first settled Minister was the Rev. A. A. J. Andrews, who served from 1900 to 1903. Then came the Rev. Joseph Cliffe from 1903 to 1905. The "Congregationalist" bears witness to the fine spirit then prevailing. The Church, though small in numbers, was afire with faith and eagerness to meet the requirements of the growing neighbourhood. The Sunday School was the big feature, the attendance taxing the capacity of the building to its uttermost. After Cliffe came the Rev. D. S. Carlyle (1905 to 1910), of whom one who knew him well says,—“During the whole of my experience I have never met a man who tried to follow in the steps of the great Master so honestly and so sincerely.” Then came the Rev. Alban Heath (1910 to 1914). In 1914 the Rev. Thomas Downham began a ministry which continued for eighteen years. It was the formative period in the life of the Church. The members, under the leadership of their Minister, rose to meet the requirements of a rapidly expanding district. In 1915 the Sunday School is reported to have doubled in numbers. In 1916 a bond of £1,000 was entirely cleared. In 1919 a scheme was initiated to raise £5,000 for the erection of a new Church as a memorial to the eleven who had fallen in the great war, and a thankoffering for those who had returned. Over £2,000 was collected in less than three months, and in 1925 the Church was opened. It is a beautiful building, standing on a commanding site, well worthy of the Denomination and of the purpose which inspired its erection. A remaining debt of £1,000



was finally cleared under the Ministry of the Rev. J. H. Perry. The active membership is 80, and there is a Sunday School of 75 children.

### **The Umlazi Group. Bellair, Sea View, Malvern. (E.)**

South of Durban, along a line of hills running down towards the sea, a line of villages has grown up along the railroad to Maritzburg. Here, in a small building near John Hillary's house, services were held as early as 1882. In 1892 the Bellair Church was formed, the members remaining on the Smith Street Roll, but with a separate Diaconate. W. B. Wakes, Harrison, Downing and Hillary are mentioned as among the first Deacons. The work prospered. In September 1899 a beautiful little Church, in simple Gothic style, with a seating capacity of 150, was dedicated. The Rev. A. A. J. Andrews, then serving in a general capacity as "the Durban Districts' Minister" presided. Three months later the Rev. E. K. Hotchkiss began a ministry which continued until 1904. It was the formative period in the life of the Church. The membership grew, a fine Sunday School became an outstanding feature, and a Christian Endeavour Society, and debating and literary societies gave an interest to the young people. Extension work was undertaken at Sea View and Malvern. The members were led to take a live interest in CUSA. They were always represented on the Natal D.A. and their subscriptions to Denominational funds were on a generous scale. The next Minister was the Rev. J. Richardson (1905 to 1919), followed by Revs. J. Evans James (1920 to 1924), F. Harris (1925 to 1930), Vernon E. Miller (1931 to 1935), and C. B. Lansdown.

### **Sea View. (E.)**

When the Sea View estate came on the market Messrs. Bennett and Thatham gave a site for a Church on the Main Road. The Minister and Deacons of Bellair took matters in hand, services were begun in private houses,

and on August 5th 1902, the Rev. E. K. Hotchkiss had the privilege of dedicating a small wood-and-iron building which had been erected at a cost of £315. The money came in part from contributions by the Sea View and Bellair people, and in part from a grant from the proceeds of the sale of old Smith Street. At first only an evening service and Sunday School were held. The Church grew with the growth of the township. For a number of years it was associated with Umbilo with as Ministers the Rev. A. T. Cadoux (1906 to 1908), and Rev. W. E. Robertson (1908 to 1911). But generally it has been associated with Bellair as part of the Umlazi Group. The work has gone from strength to strength. The membership is now 73, and a fine new brick Church is in process of erection (1939).

#### **Malvern. (E.)**

About the year 1900 a group of earnest people began the habit of meeting regularly for worship. They were a little group, who perhaps realised that God does His best work with small means. They continued in fellowship until 1904, when they united with Bellair and Sea View to send a joint Call to the Rev. John Richardson. It was then the Church was constituted with a regular roll of membership. It was then too that they began to gather funds for a building. Time passed, for they were few, until the 30th September 1911, when they moved with joy and praise from their temporary quarters in the public hall to a beautiful little Church building of their own. Since then their history has been one of happy fellowship with their partners of the Umlazi Group.

#### **Mayville. (E.)**

On a commanding site on the Main Road from Durban to the North, at a busy corner, stands the Mayville Church, a substantial building, the roof constructed from timbers taken from old Smith Street. In 1900 J. W. Sparks, Senior Deacon of Sydenham, was keenly interested in Church extension. He purchased the site for

£100 which he presented as a free gift, and with much industry set about collecting funds. Towards the close of the year he had the joy of seeing the building dedicated, the officiating Minister being the Rev. W. H. Aspden, then temporarily in charge of Sydenham. The debt was £320. In the Year Book of 1902 the Church is placed in the Sydenham Group along with Isipingo and Westville under the ministry of Rev. F. C. Rollin. A note says that the Church is becoming strongly established. In 1905 the growth of the Sunday School made the addition of a hall desirable. Mr. Cecil Vlok took the matter in hand, and acted as honorary architect. But the early promise has not been fulfilled. Mayville has declined along with its parent Church, and for much the same reasons. It is now a branch of Musgrave Road with a membership of 16 and a Sunday School enrolment of 58.

#### **Overport. (E.)**

Overport is the youngest of the Durban Churches. In 1921, largely at the instance of Mr. W. M. Fernie, a Deacon of Musgrave Road, work was commenced in this growing district. A building was erected and services and Sunday School commenced. There are now 30 members, and the Sunday School has an enrolment of 100. It is now worked under the direction of a Consulnt, with an Evangelist in charge.

#### **Lorne Street. (C.)**

Lorne Street is a Coloured Mission which since 1903 has served a useful purpose for the small Coloured community of the city. It is under Aliwal Street. It has a membership of 105 and a Sunday School with 120 scholars. Mr. A. T. Cooper was Superintendent from 1906 until his removal to Pretoria. He was followed in 1935 by Mr. J. E. Field, under whose leadership marked progress is being made.

And so we take leave of Durban with a salute to old Smith Street, now Aliwal Street, with her stalwart family of Churches, her daughters and grand-daughters.

**Pietermaritzburg. (E.)**

There is a friendly rivalry between Maritzburg and Durban for the honour of first raising the flag of Independency in Natal. The town of Maritzburg first emerged from the primeval veld when in 1838 the Emigrant Boers established their headquarters for religious and political meetings. Some five years later the English threw the aegis of their authority and protection over the land. There is no doubt that as early as 1849 Free Church religious services were held in English in the rising town. There are minutes of a meeting held in the house of Thomas Phipson on the 3rd of October of that year, which resolved to establish a Congregational Church, and to rent a room from a Mr. O'Brien for the annual sum of £24. This was called "The Meeting House", and here services were held, conducted by D. D. Buchanan, J. Harley and T. Phipson. At first the attendance was small, eighteen being regarded as a good congregation. But the town was growing, and with its growth the little community gathered strength. After eighteen months in Mr. O'Brien's room they felt themselves able to acquire a property in Loop Street, 40 ft. by 16 ft. where they had gatherings from sixty to seventy. There must have been a fine spirit in the little group. All honour to them. They contained people of varied religious antecedents, gathered, as Congregationalists always gather, with no other bond than a common allegiance to Jesus Christ.

When in 1856 Natal attained the status of a Colony, it became a country to which the Colonial Missionary Society could, under its constitution, render assistance. Accordingly application was made for a Minister. In October 1859 the Rev. John Reynolds arrived from England to take charge. He must have been a man of considerable energy and ability, and one who knew his own mind. Six months after his arrival a meeting was held at which the original organisation was dissolved, and a Church roll drawn up on Congregational lines. This was in March 1860, and may be taken as a certain

date from which to reckon the beginnings of Congregationalism in Maritzburg. The first Deacons were J. W. Prouting, E. Buchanan, and J. Wheeler. Other marks of growth in this year were the purchase of a site in Long Market Street, and the presentation to the Church by Deacon Wheeler of a silver-plated Communion service. This was the year too in which the formation of a Congregational Union for Natal was first mooted. Congregations were growing. By the end of the year the little building was found too small. Services were held in a room on the Market Square lent by the Town Council, and in October 1862 the foundation stone of the Long Market Street Church was laid, the building being consecrated on the 19th March 1863. In March 1866 Reynolds brought his ministry to a close. He was succeeded by the Rev. S. N. Waterhouse (1866 to 1874), J. Walley (1875 to 1879), and William Berry (1879 to 1883).

Then came the fine ministry of the Rev. David Russell, who was ordained to the service of the Church in April 1884. Russell was by training a ship's carpenter. He had no theological education such as can be given in a theological College, but like certain other great leaders of the Christian Church, among whom must be reckoned the Apostles, he was manifestly called of God. He was mighty in the Scriptures, and the power of God wrought through him to the saving of souls. In later years he gave himself to Evangelism, and was known throughout the English-speaking world as the South African Evangelist. In Maritzburg the Church could often not contain the evening congregations, which came to be held in the Town Hall. He remained at Maritzburg for eleven years, a time of much happiness and blessing. He then went to Cape Town to be associated with his namesake, the Rev. James Russell in the Presbyterian Ministry. By tradition and upbringing he had been a Presbyterian. It is to the honour of our Denomination, and to the Maritzburg Church, that we first gave him to the full Ministry of the Christian Church.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Walter Searle, who had been associated with the South African General Mission, and after two years returned to their service. Searle, like Russell, was Evangelistic in method, but he attained not to the stature of his brother. During his ministry a new Constitution was adopted under which the Board of Managers ceased to exist.

In October 1897 began the fine ministry of the Rev. John Fernie, whom we have already met as the co-worker with the Rev. W. H. Mann in the Durban Churches. He came to Maritzburg in the fulness of his powers. The Church so prospered that in April 1903 the Long Market building was sold, that the present beautiful and commodious building in Loop Street might be built. In all that concerned the building and the furnishing Fernie took deep and satisfying delight. It was his last effort for the Congregationalism he so greatly loved. The years were taking their toll, and he was resolved that a younger and more energetic man should take his place. Accepting an urgent invitation from the Ladysmith Church to come to their assistance, he postponed his intention to live in retirement in Durban, promising himself that after a short sojourn in the country town he would find the rest he needed. But God has His own plans. Scarcely had he reached Ladysmith when he was overcome by a severe attack of pneumonia from which he succumbed. This was in 1904. He had been forty years in the Ministry, most of it spent in South Africa. He was a man whom all who knew learnt to love. His gentleness made him great. In the pulpit and on the platform, as in his daily life, he won his way by the sheer weight of his conviction. A fine student, and possessed of a logical mind, he went to the root of all matters with which he dealt, whether it were a text of Scripture, or a problem of personal conduct, or the shaping of a policy; and because he found the roots he was able to convince others. Sir David Hunter said of him:—"I recall his apostolic labours extending over a wide area of country; his long journeys

on horseback, during which, I know, many of his discourses were cogitated; his efforts to encourage and teach young men to use their abilities in lay-preaching; his conduct of services in their own language for the benefit of the French-speaking people of Durban; and his patient, painstaking and sympathetic efforts to resolve individual doubts and spiritual difficulties."

The first Minister in the new Church was the Rev. C. A. Jeffrey (1905 to 1910). Then followed the Rev. A. G. Bridge (1910 to 1916), and the Rev. Mearns Massie (1917 to 1920). In 1920 the Rev. William Angus began a ministry which continued for eight years. This was Angus' last ministry in South Africa. He was an able man, whose energies were ever directed to the service of the Churches and the Union which he loved. Finding the morning service poorly attended he changed it into a class for young people. At no time, and under no circumstances would he allow himself to be the slave of convention. With blackboard, maps, diagrams, anything that would serve, he sought to lead the young people to a deeper understanding of the truth as he saw it. A friend writing after his death in 1929 says:—"He did not wear his heart upon his sleeve, but his heart was big and rich. There were occasions when his deeper self was revealed, and the splendour of his spirit shone. His real passion of loyalty to our Lord Jesus Christ spoke freely and frankly in all his works."

In 1929 the Rev. Ernest Mitchell began a ministry which happily still continues. There are 120 members on the Roll, and a Sunday School with 50 scholars.

Associated with the European Church are two branch Churches for Coloured and Native people. The Church for Coloured people is in Boshoff Street, where there are 130 Members and a Sunday School with 100 scholars, and ten teachers. The Coloured population of Maritzburg is not large, though it is said to be increasing. For Natives there is a Church in Greyling Street which has twelve Outstations. The membership is 236, and there



are 36 lay-preachers. The Native population is large both in the locations of the town and the neighbouring districts. They are served by the Rev. F. M. Langa, who came to us from the American Board in 1932.

### **Ladysmith. (E.)**

The Church at Ladysmith owes its origin to the initiative of the Natal Union, and the cordial co-operation of a group of Ladysmith people. In 1886 the Natal Union asked the C.M.S. to select a man for work at Estcourt. A young man, Alexander Cameron of Aberdeen, Scotland, "who had been doing work in London", was selected. When he arrived he found himself forestalled at Estcourt by the Methodists. As there was no room for two, Cameron went on to Colenso, then a tiny village of some half dozen families. Hearing of his arrival six Christian men of Ladysmith, T. Binnie, two brothers J. and T. Cairns, and three brothers D., B. and J. Sparks begged him to preach the Gospel in their town also, guaranteeing a sum of £72 for expenses. Thus by devious ways was Cameron led to the place of God's appointing. There was no building, services were held in the open air at street corners, and sometimes, when available, in a hall belonging to the Dutch Reformed Church. The work grew apace. Mr. D. Sparks Sr. of Sydenham gave a site in Lyle Street, near the railway station; a building committee was appointed, and funds collected. The site in Lyle Street not being suitable, as it was liable to be flooded during the heavy rains, it was sold for £60, and the present central site purchased for £150. Here in January 1887, only nine months after Cameron's arrival, the Church was opened and dedicated, free of debt. In recognition of his fine work the Natal Union deputed their three senior Ministers, the Revs. W. H. Mann, J. Fernie and D. Russell to proceed to Ladysmith to ordain Cameron. His work was not confined to the town, but ranged over a wide field with a radius of 45 miles, including Weenen, Dundee, Winterton, Whyford, Candy-

clough and Matinane's Hoek. Travelling was on horse-back. Lay preachers gave such help as they could, but further regular help was needed if the work was to be consolidated. Cameron invited a friend from Aberdeen, Charles Thomson, to come to his assistance. Thomson arrived in March 1887 with no guarantee of support beyond what might come from the expansion of the work. Cameron's salary at this time was £150. Three months later the Natal Union, impressed by the fine quality of Thomson, gave him ordination, and sent him to Barberton to open up work on the newly discovered gold-fields. A younger brother of Cameron's came from Scotland to assist, but throat trouble made regular preaching impossible. So for eighteen months the work grew and prospered, until the Minister was laid aside by sickness. He had consumptive tendencies. The Church did all they could, sending him on a six months furlough, but all in vain. He died at Pinetown, after less than three months ministry. He was a man of gentle spirit, beloved by all in the Church he founded, and by all who knew him.

It is pleasant to record the names of the fine little band of Christian folk who as foundation members put hand and heart to the beginnings of this small Church:—Frank Binnie, B. J. and D. Sparks, J. Cairns, T. Cairns, G. Stewart, T. Cooper, each with wife and family, E. and J. E. Northern, E. Bransby and M. Holwell.

When Cameron died, his friend Thomson returned from Barberton to carry on the work. For the next fifteen years the story is one of happy prosperity. The needs of the Natives were not forgotten. A Mission was started in September 1893 in an old store at the upper end of Lyle Street. Presently a building was secured, which in spite of an initial disaster, when a gale swept away roof and walls, had for many a year a fairly prosperous career. When Ladysmith underwent the horrors of siege during the war, the Minister and people gave themselves with marked devotion to the arduous duties of defence and the succour of distress. The little Church was used

as a hospital. After the war a bazaar, which raised £340, was organised to restore and enlarge the building. The Mayor of the town, Mr. Joseph Farquarson, in opening the bazaar, said the Church was fortunate in both its Minister and Deacons. Sixteen years before, when Lady-smith was all but unknown, they had raised the money to build the Church, which was now to be enlarged. In 1898 they had built a Manse for their Minister and his family. The "Congregationalist" of February 1904 speaks of the many evidences of the careful and effective work of both Minister and Deacons. Congregations are good in the mornings, and in the evenings the Town Hall is needed.

At the close of the war the Rev. G. F. Parker came as assistant Minister, and then next year, in 1904 Thomson resigned. An address, presented on his retirement, speaks of the fifteen years of his ministry as a time of much blessing due to the faithful preaching of the Word, and the helpful pastoral visits. Parker, whose ministry was from 1903 to 1905 gives in a pastoral letter an account of the work as he found it:—"Our Parish is truly a large one, including Bergville, Acton Homes, Colenso, Gourton and Springfield. We conduct services in the different districts in conjunction with the Ministers of sister Churches, and usually the attendance is fairly good."

After Parker came the brief ministries of F. P. Barret and R. Olver. Then came the Rev. Thomas Downham, who followed his predecessors in maintaining and extending the country work. The Year Books of the period speak of a well-maintained interest in both European and Native Churches. For the Natives the Rev. M'Bewakwana Semi was engaged. During the following Ministry of the Rev. J. Mingay Gibbins (1915 to 1919) there was serious division among the members. One of the difficulties of Church life is the maintenance of continuity in theological outlook. In 1917 the removal of H. A. Collings from the district was a real loss. The country work declined, and was presently abandoned. Subsequent

ministries were short, and uneventful,—Rev. S. Hoad (1920 to 1923), Rev. F. H. Orchard (1923 to 1926), Rev. J. Cliffe (1927 to 1929) and Mr. W. Robinson, a student, from 1930 to 1936. In 1938 Mr. G. Thornton Green took charge, under whose spiritual leadership the work is regaining something of its earlier vigour.

### **Polela. (E.)**

Among the foothills of the Drakensberg, the mighty bastion that guards the Western border of Natal, live a scattered farming community with their centre in the village of Bulwer. It is a lovely district, well watered by streams that break from the mountain valleys, alpine in the magnificence of its mountain breezes and the splendour of its scenery. The people are warm-hearted, and given to hospitality. Here, towards the close of the last century, lived the Rev. A. Christie. There was no regular Church, but Christie, with the assistance of laymen, held services. Among the laymen was W. R. Moodie, who for a period of eight years went once a month and never once failed to hold the appointed service, whatever the weather. In January 1901 the Rev. W. H. Aspden went at the request of CUSA, to explore the needs of the district. His report after a three months' visit, was that the people would welcome services under the auspices of the Union, but were not confident that they could maintain a regular ministry. In July of the same year the Rev. E. K. Hotchkiss went for two Sundays, during which he held services at Watermead in the residence of Mr. Palframan, and spent a Sunday at Bulwer. He found an attendance of from 40 to 60 with excellent prospects of establishing a quiet, helpful work. During the following year the farmers clubbed together to purchase a plot at Watermead on which they built a hall, which was opened by the Rev. A. J. Andrews. The Rev. A. Christie was then formally installed as Minister. The membership was about 70. Plans were instituted for building a Manse. So, quietly, with evidence of Divine blessing,

the work began. With the constitution of the Church, and the subsequent extension of the work in the country districts towards the Drakensberg Mountains, the connection with the town of Bulwer ceased. There is a Presbyterian Mission there, which sufficiently meets the requirements of the village. In 1908 after years of happy service, Christie died.

For the next few years services were held occasionally, as Ministers from Durban and Maritzburg were available. From 1912 to 1918 the Rev. J. Evans James was resident Minister. A Manse was built at Underberg, and services were held at Underberg, Watermead, Himeville, Highlands and Cora Lenn. From 1920 to 1921 Clifford Newell, a student, was Minister. Then came the Rev. Frank Harris, followed by R. H. Tyndall, F. Briggs and H. R. Lloyd. There are now seven preaching-stations where the people gather to receive the guidance and consolations of the Gospel.

### **Ikwezi and Harding. (N.)**

In the South Western corner of Natal, where Alfred County juts out into Pondoland, lies a beautiful land of hill and valley, with its administrative centre in the village of Harding. There is a small European population in the village, and scattered on surrounding farms, but the great bulk of the people are Natives who live in innumerable kraals on the surrounding hills. Here in 1877 the Rev. S. Aitchison took over a Mission, recently begun by the Rev. J. Clark, to which he and his capable wife gave over fifty-five years of devoted service. The Rev. David Russell, writing in 1914, reveals the spirit and accomplishment of these years of labour:—"When the story of Ikwezi is fully written it will take rank with the best stories of faith and work during the last quarter of a century. Coming out to take up work for the Y.M.C.A. of Birmingham, before they had well begun, their sponsors had to send the discouraging tidings that they were unable to implement their promise to support

them entirely, but would send what they could. Nothing daunted, the Missionaries, believing that God had sent them, threw themselves upon His promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." And from that day until this they have been practically faith Missionaries. Their work has increased on every side, their name is a household word alike among white and black people. They have built substantial Churches for the Colonists, the Griquas and the Natives, and have a girdle of preaching stations all around Harding."

Ikwezi lies in a lovely open valley some seven miles from Harding. Here are a brick Church, also used for school purposes, a Manse and cottage for the Missionaries. At Marchmont, some twenty miles away is a sub-station with wood-and-iron building. Scattered throughout the district are eleven principal preaching stations, each with a wattle-and-daub building, and in some cases with a school. A tour round the Mission leaves the impression of much achievement with limited financial resources, but great resources of faith and devotion. A farm, known as Sheep Walk, brings in a small but helpful revenue. In the town of Harding a substantial brick building serves the needs of the Griquas for both Church and school.

In 1932 Mr. Aitchison transferred the whole of the properties to CUSA in return for a life pension for himself and wife. Dr. Hertzlet was appointed to succeed, but did not win the confidence of the people or their aged Missionaries. Following him came Pastor (now Rev.) F. Goddard, who in a pastorate of five years (1932 to 1937) fully restored the tradition of a united and prosperous Mission. The work is now in the hands of A. D. Phipson, who well maintains the tradition of energetic spiritual service. The old brick Church at the central station recently began to show signs of final decay. It has been pulled down, and a wood-and-iron building substituted for use both as Church and school. The Rev.

and Mrs. Aitchison passed into the unseen within a few hours of each other, thus fittingly closing over fifty years of united service.

### **Harding. (E.)**

The European Church at Harding grew out of the Mission. In 1889 the presence of a considerable garrison led Aitchison to give them such services as he was able. A small Church of wood and iron was erected where for thirty years services were continued. The building proving too small, a substantial building of brick was opened and dedicated about the year 1918. In 1906 the Rev. S. S. Aitchison, son of the old Missionaries, came to his father's assistance. His death in 1921 was a grievous loss to the whole district. Since that time the Church has been served under the ministries of J. F. Goring, F. Goddard and F. Harris.

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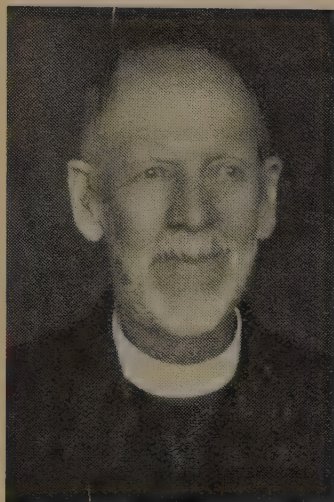
## V.—THE CHURCHES OF THE NORTHERN DISTRICT ASSOCIATION.

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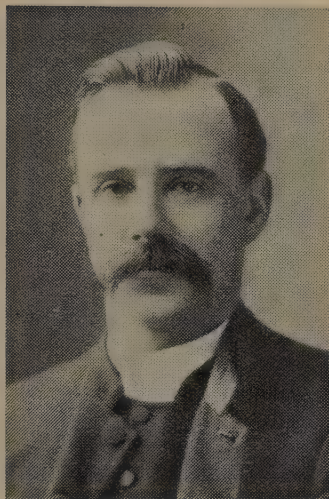
The N.D.A. extends from the Orange River to the Zambesi, and beyond; an area more than half the size of Europe. It may well be the largest diocese in the world, and with the smallest population. There are about twenty Churches.

In early days this vast district owed much to Congregationalism. We were the pioneers, the "Voortrekkers." As early as 1801 the L.M.S. had a Mission to the Griquas in what is now the Southern Free State and Griqualand West. By 1820 there were at least two fully constituted L.M.S. Churches, with schools and outstations, at Philippolis and Griquatown. In 1813 John Campbell, a London Minister, made the first known journey along the Western Transvaal border as far North as Marico (Zeerust). In 1818 Hamilton began work among the Bechuana, and two years later Moffat was at Kuruman. In 1829 a spiritual awakening led to the first Christian Church among the Bechuana. The great building at Kuruman, whose centenary was celebrated in 1938, stands as a monument to the spiritual victories of our fathers in the faith. Moffat was a great traveller whose achievements have been overshadowed by the greater fame of his son-in-law, David Livingstone. Five times he visited Mosilikatze, first in the neighbourhood of the present town of Pretoria, once in the Marico, and three times he made the arduous journey to distant Matabeleland. He opened the road to the North, long known as the Missionaries' Road; and his successors kept it open. For a generation Kuruman remained the base from which all journeys to the interior, Missionary or otherwise, were started. From here Livingstone set out to reach Lake Ngami, the Zambesi, the Victoria Falls, and beyond. To-day a chain of Mission Stations, financed by our Churches in England, extends along the whole Western Transvaal border, and into Rhodesia. These are achievements of

# SOME LEADERS OF CHURCH LIFE IN JOHANNESBURG.



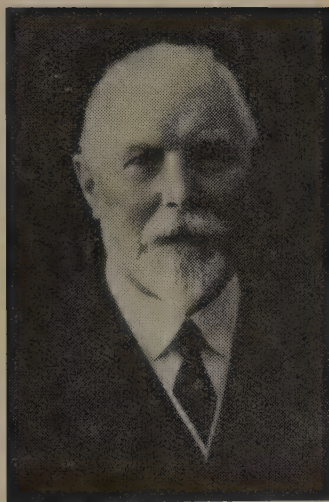
Rev. CHARLES PHILLIPS.



Rev. J. C. HARRIS.



Mr. J. H. MACKAY.



Mr. WILLIAM ANSTEY.



magnitude. Africa owes much to the spiritual energy of British and American Congregationalism.

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### **Early Attempts at Church extension in the Transvaal.**

The Natal Union were the first to hear the call for Church services in the Transvaal. When, sometime in the eighties, the first gold rush took place to the Low Veld, the Rev. David Russell was sent to explore the needs and opportunities. The result was the opening of a Church at Barberton with Mr. Ridette as Minister. But the Church did not continue long. The discoveries on the Rand drew away the population. The Church was closed, and attention given to Johannesburg. Then the Cape Union took a hand. In 1890 work was begun among the Coloured people,—a story which will presently have a place. Then in 1895 came the Jameson Raid drawing the attention of the whole civilized world to the future greatness of the Transvaal. The Rev. D. B. Hooke, the energetic secretary of the C.M.S., impressed by the advantage of being early in the field, led his Society to adopt the Rand as a special field of service. The Society had not much money, but such as it had was voted generously, and for four years, until the Boer war brought all things to a standstill, a steady stream of young Ministers, appointed in London, came to South Africa.

The first to arrive was the Rev. M. Richardson. In spiritual quality he was well equipped for pioneer work. He had an industry and courage which no difficulties could daunt. The writer has seen him at work, note-book in hand, going from house to house, listing the people, inviting the children to Sunday School and all to the services. Had he had more business gumption he would have made a great leader. After a few months, in August 1896, came the Rev. H. C. W. Newell, also a man of fine spiritual quality, but too sensitive for the rough and tumble work to which he had been sent. A month later two lay workers arrived, J. D. Orr and Richard

Sharp. Richardson made Ophirton his centre, which seemed to him the ideal spot, right in the midst of the mining traffic, next door to one of the most prosperous mines. Here he built a small but substantial Church of brick, which was opened in September 1896, the special preacher being the Rev. W. H. Richards, who was brought up from Kimberley for the purpose. He did not confine himself to any one place. He opened Braamfontein and Turffontein, and was ever active in fulfilling his Master's command to go into all the world. He followed the Mines as they expanded East and West, ever seeking opportunity to preach the Word. Places suggested for new Churches sound strange to present-day ears,—Riversdale, Booy-sens, Claremont, Celleria, Camptonville, Bellevue, Klip River. Then came the war which sent him as a refugee to Natal. On his return he placed William Medhurst at Ophirton, while he went to consolidate his venture at Turffontein. But Ophirton could not continue. The proximity to the mine which had seemed so attractive proved its undoing. Dump heaps made the place untenable. In 1907 it was sold for a fraction of its cost.

At Braamfontein Newell began in good heart. In 1897 a site was secured on which a wood-and-iron building was erected, the C.M.S. giving a loan of £1,000. For two years he struggled on, and then found the work was not for him. He said: "I preached out of my heart, I visited them in their homes, I sought them in love, and there was no response." The C.M.S. filled the gap, first by Owen Lewis of Brecon College, who stayed only a few weeks, and then two students from Yorkshire College, F. C. Rollin and J. P. Thompson, who came out to a joint pastorate. It was the eve of the war. Thompson became a Military Chaplain, and Rollin was allowed to remain,—the only Congregational Minister so privileged. With him were two Methodist Ministers, and the three worked together. He writes of his experiences,—“With one or two exceptions all my people, English and Dutch, did what they could to help in the trying circumstances.” When the British arrived Rollin went to Natal leaving

his friend Thompson in charge. After the peace the Rev. J. Cliffe was sent out to take charge, but remained for only six months. Circumstances had changed. The district had become predominantly Dutch. In 1903 it was sold.

In these pre-war efforts the C.M.S. played a lone hand, with the South African Union a sleeping partner. With the peace came a change. English Congregationalism became reluctant to aid in a land which in their Pro-Boer eyes had been unjustly ravished. The Rand was no longer a special field of C.M.S. activity. The union of the two Unions of the Cape and Natal had given birth to CUSA, whose first activity was the formation of a Church extension committee with the Rev. William Angus as Secretary. The Assembly issued an appeal for funds, and two Rand centres were occupied, Bellevue and Boksburg. William Medhurst began hopefully at the former place, and at Boksburg Walter Friend, Alexander Francis and A. E. Heath each spent a month of active prospecting. Neither venture flourished. The commercial slump dried up subscriptions. A plot for a Church purchased at Springs lay derelict. The project of reopening at Pretoria was abandoned. For a generation no further progress was made in Church extension in the rapidly-growing towns and cities of the Transvaal.

### **The Churches of Johannesburg. Bree Street. (E.)**

In the early months of 1889 there arrived in Johannesburg a young Minister and his wife, sent out by the C.M.S. at the urgent request of the Natal Congregational Union. The Rev. F. J. Ecclestone was fresh from Hackney College, a man of earnest but sensitive character, accustomed to the quiet ways of English Church life. He looked upon a city in the making,—dumps, dust, ox waggons, small houses of wood-and-iron, jostling the more substantial buildings which were in the building,—no railway, no telephone, an uncertain post and water supply, but a city which all men said had come to stay. The gold rush was at its height, Cobb and Co's coaches



were running fully laden with young men, and not a few families, from the old Colonies of the Cape and Natal, and from the ends of the earth. It was a situation which the C.M.S. and the Congregational Unions of Natal and the Cape, not yet united, must face; and he had come as their emissary to face it.

The situation was promising. A number of young men, some with families, were ready to welcome him. A Provisional Committee was formed, which held its first meeting in J. H. Mackay's store on April 22nd, 1889. Those present were Rev. F. J. Ecclestone in the chair, with Messrs. Hunter, J. H. Mackay, Thomas White, D. Hockley, H. W. Gillespie, F. Pugh, and Grice. Other members were John Forrest and McLowat. John Forrest was elected Secretary with Grice as Treasurer. Three days later a second meeting was held at which it was agreed to insert in the five local papers a notice:—

#### CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, MASONIC HALL.

Services will be held in this Hall, by kind permission of the trustees, for a few Sundays, until a building now on the way from Natal is erected. Morning service at 11 a.m. and evening service at 7.30 p.m. Minister, Rev. F. J. Ecclestone.

Mr. Hockley reported that £25 had been subscribed. Thus was the Church launched with services and an income, but as yet no roll of members, and with a building coming up by ox-waggon from Natal. Evidently the services were attended, for we read of the purchase of, first one dozen, and then another two dozen chairs for their accommodation.

On July 2nd the first public meeting of the congregation was held in the Baptist Church, Church Street, at which seventeen persons attended. The provisional committee now retired, and a permanent committee was elected, consisting of Messrs Hockley, Mackay, Crane, Riley, Dick, Thomson and Forrest. A week later this Committee purchased a stand in von Brandis Square on which to



erect a permanent Church, and leased a second stand in the same neighbourhood for the temporary site of the temporary building. The Church was now both landed proprietor and lease holder, and it had also a balance sheet shewing in August an income of £1,233, including a loan of £700,—the purchase price of the Von Brandis site.

And now we come to the birth of the Church. On the 13th November 1889 a meeting was held in the Church, sixteen being present, at which a Communion Roll was framed, a Constitution adopted, and the Church christened as "THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF JOHANNESBURG." Slowly, with much difficulty about finance, the Church evolved. In March 1890 a Sunday School was started. About the same time a women's work-party was organised, which held its first sale of work in March 1891, with a nett result of £42. Then Ecclestone resigned. He had never been happy as a pioneer, and both his own and his wife's health were unequal to the strain.

Letters from John Forrest, the Church Secretary, to the C.M.S. and to Rev. J. Fernie of Natal reveal the difficulties he had faced. He had come as an unknown man without preliminary announcement. There had been no building, and no provision for finance beyond the meagre grant of £100 by the C.M.S. The conditions demand an unmarried man. Mr. Fernie replied that the Rev. W. H. Mann was in England and would confer with the C.M.S. to secure a successor. The choice fell on Dewdney Drew, a student from Regents Park College. A letter addressed to the Rev. J. Fernie shews the uncertainty with which the Church received the news. Drew is to be ordained in Durban. The Church is practically extinct. No services have been held for eight weeks, and there are no funds. The initial grant of £50 promised by the C.M.S. will be needed at once, as also a continuation of the annual grant of £100. "The venture is theirs, and they must back it." If Drew is the right man he will succeed; if not he will not have a chance.

On the 10th November 1891 a social meeting was held to welcome the new Minister, at which Ministers of other Churches were present. The wood-and-iron building was removed to the site in Von Brandis Square. Congregations were good. New names began to appear on the rolls,—Bottomley, Curtis, Darby, Boustred, Chapman, Reid, and later, Hoyle, Chudleigh, Steytler, Howden, Seton, P. H. Mackay, Norman Anstey and Downing. Progress was such that on August 7th, 1894, it was decided to sell the Von Brandis site to provide funds to purchase what was regarded as a better position at the corner of Bree and End Streets. The old site realised £1,435, and the stand on which the Church now stands was purchased for £800. The architect for the new building was R. Howden, A.R.I.B.A. and the builders Messrs. Cooper and Thorpe, whose tender was for £4,300. The foundation stone was laid in a characteristic dust storm on the 14th July, 1895, by the Mining Commissioner, J. L. van der Merwe.

Shortly after the opening Drew resigned, much to the regret of the congregation. There followed a period of uncertainty, and then came the ministry of the Rev. J. C. Harris. He was the first Minister to be called by the direct action of the Church. He was a young man of much enthusiasm and ability. He had come to South Africa by appointment of the C.M.S. to undertake Mission work at Barrack Street in connection with Caledon Square Church. So successful was he that he was ordained, and appointed to the newly-opened Church at Observatory. There he proved himself an able preacher, and a beloved pastor. No better man could have been called to the charge at Bree Street. Every department of the work blossomed into new life, and plans were made to co-operate with CUSA and the C.M.S. for Church extension in the rapidly growing city. Then in October 1899 came the dispersion of the Boer war. Johannesburg became a deserted city. Among the refugees were the Minister and most of his congregation. The Church was dispersed, but not dissolved. There was a communal life

which exile did not break. Contributions were received from which the Minister, now engaged in refugee relief work, was paid a small continuing salary. On January 5th, 1902, when the exigencies of war had permitted a return, Mr. W. H. Haddon presided over a most interesting meeting, perhaps the most significant meeting in the whole history of the Church. There were present Messrs Forrest, J. W. Phillips, Haywood, Campbell, Roberts, Chudleigh, Norman Anstey, Jennings, Kayser, Crouch, Cadoux, Farryer, Morgan and P. H. Mackay. It was not a large gathering, for many had not yet returned. It was agreed to prepare a welcome for the Minister, who was expected soon, and to do all that could be done to restart the services after the two years break.

Then for two more fruitful years the Church work went forward with many manifestations of the Divine blessing. New members were enrolled, among them William Anstey, who in later years had the supreme honour of election to the Chair of CUSA. To meet the growing needs a Church Hall and School-room were built. Then, after repeated warnings, the Minister's health gave way. He had in the two brief periods of his service before and after the war, given to the Church a sense of its place and purpose in the growing life of a great city.

We have told the story of these early years in some detail, for it is the story of the growth of the Church into self-conscious manhood. Later years need not detain us long. Gerald Willoughby's Ministry from 1904 to 1906 was without incident. Then followed the Rev. Frank Collyer during whose time the Church, which had in 1892 transferred its allegiance from the Natal Union to the Cape, implemented its new association by beginning to subscribe to Union funds. In October 1909 the Congregational Union of South Africa, which now included the Churches of Natal, held its Annual Assembly in Johannesburg for the first time. It was the Jubilee Assembly. A great meeting was held in the Church with Lord Methuen, His Majesty's Representative in South Africa, in the

chair. The speakers were Sir David Hunter, the Rev. J. S. Moffat, the Rev. Pedr Williams and Dr. Rubusana. The Chairman for the year was Mr. D. M. Whyte of Port Elizabeth, and the preacher the Rev. Walter Friend of the same city. It was a fine demonstration of the nationwide interests upon which the Church had now entered. But there is another side to the story. The migrations of population were transforming Bree Street into a downtown Church.

Collyer was followed by the Rev. J. G. Aldridge. He had come to us from Methodism, first at Bulawayo and then at Aliwal Street. He was a man of fine presence, a good preacher, specially attractive to young men, and with much driving power in administration. No better man could have led the Church through the opening stages of the great war. He went to France in the service of the Y.M.C.A. and after a brief period was killed during the final advance. He was succeeded by the Rev. G. Crawford Stanley, whose energetic leadership of the Church and of the Union are living memories. Largely owing to his advocacy the New Era campaign was launched; Church extension was undertaken at Yeoville, Kensington and in Pretoria; and Bree Street had the privilege of learning the inner secrets of our denominational life when it became the Executive centre. He served for a time as Union Secretary, and was called to the Chair. His resignation owing to the continued ill health of Mrs. Stanley was a real loss to South Africa.

Bree Street has now entered upon a new phase of Church life. Most of the stalwarts whose names have figured in this narrative have passed on. Their liberality is no longer the bulwark of Church finance. With quiet courage the younger members are entering into the hidden joys of the burden of leadership. The present Minister, the Rev. Basil H. M. Brown, is of Missionary descent, a grandson of the Rev. J. T. Brown of the Bechuana Mission. He is a Mansfield man, one of a number of young Ministers who will lead the Union in the days to come.

**Ebenezer. (C.)**

Ebenezer Church, for the Coloured people of the Reef, has a membership of 3,600, and a Sunday School with 2,000 children with 100 teachers. It is the largest Church in the Union, and probably the largest single organisation of its kind in South Africa, or it may be in the world. Its origin was of the true Congregational order. No Minister gathered them, they gathered themselves. In 1892, when the Rand was young, a number of Coloured members from our Churches in the Old Colony, "whose hearts God had touched" banded themselves together to form a Church. They were in what to them was a foreign land. Coloured people had no standing in the old Transvaal. They were what the early Congregationalists were in the days of the Stuarts, "a gathered Church" in a hostile land. Presently they gathered others to them until they were strong enough to purchase a small building capable of seating eighty persons in Ferreira's Town. They sought and found in a Mr. J. Büchler a Minister, who in 1893 was at their request ordained by CUSA. So the infant Church was brought into the Congregational fold. Büchler's ministry does not appear to have been successful, for after two years he resigned, and disappears from the scene. The Church sought the advice of the Executive, who urged upon the Rev. Charles Phillips, the Minister of a flourishing Church at Graaff Reinet, the adventure of work amid the uncertain conditions of the Gold Fields. CUSA and the C.M.S. gave such help as they could, and on February 8th, 1896, Phillips was inducted. From that date the Church never looked back.

The little cottage where the work began stood just opposite the present site of Ebenezer. Within a month of Phillips' arrival it was proving too small. The twenty-six members who had called him were growing into a substantial number. A new site of four stands was donated in Burghersdorp (now New Town), where a large building which Phillips later characterised as "Our tin Tabernacle" was erected with lecture hall, and school rooms. This was Ebenezer No. 1. All this was accomplished in the first year.

Presently the Town Council condemned the whole layout of Burghersdorp as insanitary. All the buildings were expropriated, including the Church, and a new township (New Town) laid out on the old site. Ebenezer received as its share of compensation £5,450, with which a new and much more sightly and substantial Church was built, with school room, Manse, Caretaker's house, and Y.P.C.A. buildings. Lord Milner laid the foundation-stone on January 1st, 1905, and the Earl of Selborne performed the opening ceremony in September of the same year. The "Transvaal Leader" of that date describes the Minister as "The most courageous and farsighted Minister engaged in Christian work on the Reef." This was Ebenezer No. 2.

During these first ten years the opening of branch Churches and outstations had been proceeding apace. Among early ventures are Roodepoort, Elandsfontein, Boksburg, Ophirton and Rosherville. Wherever a group of Coloured people was found there a Church and school were planned. Money was found by the many contributions of the people, and from rent paid when the building was used for a Government school. Seven such Government schools were in operation. The Church membership had risen from 26 to 600. Two assistant Ministers had served, the Rev. A. Sampson and the Rev. F. Scheepers, both of whom had found service elsewhere. During this time, and throughout his life, Phillips was ever battling for the rights of the Coloured people. He was well-known and respected in Government circles both in Pretoria, and at the Offices of the Town Council. In 1897 he was elected President of the Witwatersrand Church Council, then at the peak of its influence.

The growing work, and the shifting of the population demanded a third migration. In April 1909 Lord Selborne laid the foundation stone of the present Ebenezer Church at the corner of Main and Wolhuter Streets. It is a simple but handsome building of brick. The cost was £2,900. At the opening a remaining debt of £800 was reduced by half by a collection of £100, and by the gifts of



300 members who each gave a pound. So by the sacrifices of the many do the poor of the earth establish their strength. Two years later the Pilkington Hall for Sunday School and other purposes was added. The Hall is 70 feet in length by 35 feet in breadth, and there are in addition five class rooms. Again, in 1918, a Hall for manual and domestic training was built on the adjoining block at a cost of £1,500.

In 1911 Phillips while on furlough engaged the Rev. J. Rogers of Brecon College as assistant. During the whole of his life Rogers with his devoted wife served the interests of the Church and of the Coloured people of the Union with marked ability. His death, while in the fulness of his powers, is one of God's dealings with His people which we will understand only when the final Books are opened. On his return from furlough Phillips threw himself with all his accustomed energy into the attack. Here are some of the records taken from the pages of the Congregationalist, shewing his quick rapier-like thrusts. April 1912, Randfontein opened; May 1912, Kleinfontein shifted to a new site and enlarged; August 1912, new Church at Klip River; September 1912 Rossettenville opened; February 1913, Sophia Town enlarged; April 1913, Denver opened; June 1913, Germiston has new Church. Then follows a break of eighteen months with only one new Church at New Clare. But from 1915 to 1918, when the world was concentrated on the war, five Churches were opened:—Florida, Alexander Township, New Modderfontein, Springs and Prospect Township. When in 1917 Phillips celebrated his twenty-first year of service, the Church membership had risen to 1,400, and the value of the property was put at £20,000. In 1937, when advancing years led to his retirement, the membership had grown to 3,000, with no less than fifty Outstations, each with substantial buildings. The Assembly put on record its appreciation of a life well spent in the service of Christ our Lord:—

“The value of the work in incalculable. He has been a leader of the Coloured people in their struggle



for justice and liberty, representing them before Governors and Statesmen, promoting the education of their children, and providing homes for the aged and infirm..... For the greater part of this time he had as help-meet a wife, who gave herself whole-heartedly to the same work."

When he passed in the fulness of years a great gathering which overflowed into all available space in Church and Hall, and crowded the adjoining streets, met to do him honour. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Mullineux (1934 to 1940). The present Minister is the Rev. D. K. Clinton.

### **Turffontein. (E.)**

So far as one Church can fill the bill Congregationalism is well represented in the Southern suburbs. Our Turffontein Church has a membership of 100, with a Sunday School of 130 scholars on its roll. In the December "Congregationalist" of 1897 is an account of the opening of the first building. It was a small structure, 40 feet by 20 feet, built of brick and furnished with chairs. The cost is not mentioned, only the remaining debt, which was £50. It was the third Church, the only one remaining, opened by the Rev. M. Richardson. Richardson remained in charge until the exigencies of the war drove both Minister and congregation from the Transvaal. On the 13th of May, 1905, when the war clouds had passed, and Johannesburg was again getting into its stride, a ministry began which lasted for fifteen years. The Rev. Joseph Cliffe was from Nottingham College. After several short pastorates in England, he came to South Africa at the instance of the C.M.S. He was a genial man, a devoted pastor, and his preaching had the authentic note of the Gospel call. Under him the Church grew and prospered. The welcome-social, over which J. S. Seaton presided, was large and enthusiastic, boding well for the years to come. Here, as always, the presence and help of a number of lay men and women made all the difference to the welfare of the cause. Among these J. S. Seaton was by common consent, a leader. With him was associated Francis Fishwick.

Within three months of Cliffe's settlement plans were made for the building of a larger and more suitable Church. The people worked with a will. In January, only six months after the Minister's arrival, the foundation-stone was laid, and in March the Church was opened by Lord Selborne. It cost £1,200, towards which the C.M.S. gave a loan of £500 free of interest, and the Church-extension fund of CUSA £250 on the same generous terms. A friend who was present at the opening writes: "The old Church was poor in appearance and in structure, and often crowded to capacity. We saw it on a sultry Summer evening with 110 present, and listened to the complaint of the preacher that the congregation was not up to the average. Let us make no mistake, this congregation was gathered by straightforward spiritual endeavour." Signs of vitality are given in such reports as these. June 1906, congregations are from 150 to 200. August 1907, the annual Church meeting had an attendance of 170, and the membership has increased by 11 per cent. May 1908, the total income is £601, a pipe organ has been installed, towards which the Church raised £215, the Carnegie Trust gave £107, and friends in England £50. August 1910, the Sunday School is doing well, the debt has been reduced during the year by £350. August 1913, a further £75 has been paid off the debt.

In January 1914, Cliffe, feeling the strain undermining his health, and thinking a younger man might do better, tendered his resignation. The Church declined to accept resignation, and gave a six months' holiday. On his return the members were rallied to undertake a house to house visitation, which gave encouraging results. In May 1916, the Minister, realising the failure of his powers, and his increasing deafness, again tendered his resignation, which was again met by the offer of a prolonged holiday. This led to a further term of three years service, but in June 1919, the Ministry was brought finally to a close. The Union Representative writing of his impressions says, "Cliffe gave the best years of his life to the Church, and left an abiding memorial in the

affections of the people." He was followed by the Rev. J. Thorpe Legg from 1920 to 1924. Legg was a man of robust character, who at first combined the duties of Chief Scout-Master of the Transvaal with the service of the Church. After him came the brief ministry of J. A. Mullineux, 1925 to 1928. In 1928 D. B. Adendorff came as Student Pastor. He was ordained in 1934, and still continues a ministry which in its Evangelical appeal and devotion to service, recalls the best of the early years.

### Yeoville. (E.)

Bree Street was twenty-five years of age when she hailed the arrival of her first-born. On the 6th of February 1918 a meeting was held at the residence of Mr. A. F. Tompkins attended by the Minister of Bree Street, the Rev. J. G. Aldridge, with two of his deacons, W. H. Port and A. F. Tompkins, together with Messrs. Bagley, Craine, Kimber and Kayser. They had at their disposal a sum of £500 from the sale of the Clifton property,—a sum originally loaned to Clifton by the C.M.S., and now transferred as a free gift for European Church extension. Also there was an offer of the free use of the Cinema Hall in Bedford Street from Mr. George Reid; and, best of all, the Rev. J. Martin Dower was available as Minister. Unanimously, under a sense of Divine leadership, the meeting decided on the venture of a new Church in the suburb of Yeoville. Subscriptions came in, and on the first Sunday of April the first service was held. A month later, on the 10th of March, 1918, the Church was constituted with thirty-one Foundation members.

From that date progress was rapid. The "Congregationalist" for August says the congregations in the Cinema Hall were 50 in the mornings and 100 at the evening services. A site was purchased at the corner of Muller and Bedford Streets, and plans drawn for a Church Hall,—the whole to cost some £2,000. During the Assembly of 1919 the building was dedicated by the father of the Minister,—the Rev. William Dower, one of

the last acts which this saint and soldier of Christ performed for his beloved C U S A. In the meantime a Sunday School had been organised by Mrs. Dower, and branch work started in the neighbouring suburb of Norwood. In 1921, only two years after the consecration, the debt was reduced to £150, the result of a challenge offer by Mr. W. Anstey, always a generous supporter of the Church, though he retained his membership at Bree Street.

In this same year the Church suffered a sad loss in the death of Mrs. Dower, whose genial presence and leadership in all Church life, particularly in the Women's Association and the Sunday School, had been an inspiration. One who knew her well wrote, "In her life as in her death she gave her all, a gift fine in quality as it was splendid in unselfishness." Dower's health gave way under this added strain. He had been acting as Secretary to C U S A. in addition to his Church duties. He was ordered a long rest. On his return he carried on for a further two years, but in 1923 resigned to become the general Moderator for all C U S A. Native work, with residence in the Transkei, and special care of the Transkei Churches.

During the ministry of his successor, the Rev. Allen Constantine (1923 to 1925), there was a division among the members, due in part to doctrinal differences. Dower returned to a second period of service (1925 to 1928). Subsequent ministries have been short, E. G. Mitchell (1928 to 1929), Frank Harris (1930 to 1933), O. E. Lovell (1934 to 1936), R. Mackintosh (1936 to 1938), E. C. Warden, and in 1938 A. V. Whiting. Whiting came with a fine reputation, as a nominee of the Rev. Lionel Fletcher. The Church expressed its high hopes by organising what was in effect a civic reception, at which the Mayor and leading Ministers of the Churches of the city spoke their welcome. There was a fine beginning, but the promise was not fulfilled. After less than two years' ministry Whiting intimated his acceptance of a Call to Australia. The Church, disappointed but not daunted, have been cheered by the acceptance of a Call extended to the Rev. J. Mullineux.

### Moffat Memorial Church, Kensington. (E.)

Kensington is one of the largest, and some say the most British, of the newer Johannesburg suburbs. Here on Saturday the 8th of January, 1927, the foundation-stone of a new venture in European Church extension was laid by Lady Hoy, a grand-daughter of Robert Moffat of Kuruman fame. Fittingly the Church was named the Moffat Memorial Church.

The Church is an offshoot of Bree Street. There were eleven Foundation Members, all of whom were transferred from the parent Church; Rev. John Cameron, Mr. John Cameron, Miss H. M. Cameron, Mr. and Mrs. E. Abbott, Miss Dorothy Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Adams, Miss Elsie Adams, and Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Thompson. Of these Mr. and Mrs. Adams are still active in the service of the Church, all the rest having left, so rapid are the migrations in the city. The building is small, but beautiful, as fine a specimen of Church architecture as Johannesburg possesses. The cost was £1162. The opening, which was also the Induction of the Minister, the Rev. James Craig, on the 16th of March, 1927, was an occasion long remembered. It was a wet night, but this did not damp the ardour of the assembled congregation. Among those present was Mr. H. S. Everett, who, in a few but well chosen words, declared the Church open for the service of Almighty God.

Mr. Craig's Ministry was short. In 1929 he was succeeded by the Rev. Joseph Cliffe, who came to give the closing years of a life spent in the service of our African Churches. We have met him at Turffontein and Florida Road, and shall meet him again presently at Zeerust. The present Minister writes: "He died suddenly at the close of 1935 when preparing for the evening service. You will know all about him,—what a saint he was, what a hard worker, and what a fine preacher, and how terribly handicapped with deafness." In May 1936 he was succeeded by the Rev. J. H. Atkinson, whose ministry still happily continues. In 1937 a much-needed vestry was

added to the building at a cost of £150, and in 1938 a Manse was built at a cost of just over £1400. A feature of the Church is the number of young people belonging to the young peoples' association, whose interest in the Church and in social service bodes well for the days to come.

### **Pretoria.—The European Church.**

In 1902, shortly after the British occupation, the Rev. James le Pla came from Cape Town to undertake Christian work among the British who were gathering in the City. The conditions were hard. The commandoes were still in the field, and the population was necessarily fluctuating, and little disposed to the quiet things of the Gospel. But there were a number of Congregationalists, some of them old residents holding good positions, and the outlook appeared promising. The "Cape Times" of April 17th 1902 says), "He has drawn together a flourishing congregation, and won the sympathy of all interested in Church work." Services were held in a school-room kindly granted by the Education Department. It was the time of the post-war boom. Money was abundant, and discretion at a discount. Greatly daring, with little or no money, le Pla secured a site in Schoeman Street, where in April 1903, a neat Church was opened capable of seating 100. Then, three months later, ill-health compelled his resignation. The Rev. Alexander Francis came to fill the breach. No better selection could have been made, for Francis had been for many years Minister of the Embassy Church at St. Petersburg, where he had mingled freely with men of high Government standing. "The people," says Watson, "took heart of grace." But illness again led to resignation. It was a time of disillusionment, the great slump had followed the boom. Money was hard to get, promises of support could not be fulfilled, new projects in Church and in business were falling on every side, and among them passed our first



attempt to establish ourselves as a Congregational Community in the city that was soon to be the National Capital.

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A quarter of a century passed. Pretoria grew in population and influence, until it came to rank with Johannesburg and Cape Town as the third largest city in the Union. All this time the witness of Congregationalism, so potent in shaping the destinies of our land, was silent. Congregationalists who came to the City joined other Communions, where at times they rose to positions of Christian leadership. In 1913 the Government census gave as many as 3,686 Congregationalists in the City, of whom 346 were European. The loss to our Order, and as a consequence, the loss to South African Christian life, could not be allowed to continue. In 1926 the Northern District Association took steps to secure the names and addresses of Congregationalists. The Rev. J. B. Watson undertook to call upon all who gave their names. The result was so encouraging that on the 24th September a meeting was called in the Y.W.C.A. Hall, which appointed a Committee to consider ways and means. The Cecil Hall in Vos Street, Sunnyside, was engaged, and services begun on the 24th of November, 1926. Ministers from Johannesburg, Durban and elsewhere came to give their services, and the community grew with such rapidity as to justify its more formal establishment. On the 20th February 1927 the Rev. J. H. Glover presided over a meeting at which the Church was formally constituted with a roll of 36 Foundation members. A Constitution was framed, and the first Deacons elected, Messrs. J. E. Fernie, J. E. Field, H. C. Woodhead, and H. A. Johnson. A resolution was passed placing on record the appreciation of the services of the Rev. J. B. Watson, "Who, as an instrument in God's hands was largely used in the foundation of this Church, and who, as Consul, has been a tower of strength." At a later meeting a Call was sent to the Rev. J. Martin Dower of Yeoville, who to the great satisfaction of all, felt himself called of God to accept.



Mr. Dower's Ministry was the formative period in the early history of the Church. His gifts as a preacher, and his equally great gifts in pastoral care and administration gave him a commanding position both in the growing Church and the whole of Pretoria. His marriage to Miss Kathleen Denham in the following year was an added blessing. Mrs. Dower had had a distinguished career in London in connection with the Penge Congregational Church, and throughout England in connection with the C.M.S. She threw herself with characteristic energy and ability into the work which lead to an ever-increasing expansion both in the inner life of the Church, and in its influence in the City and the Denomination.

In the meantime the Church had moved from the Cecil Hall to a more central position in the Hall of the Dutch Reformed Church in Troye Street. But a building of their own was essential if the Church were to be established on enduring foundations. After careful enquiry a site was purchased in Leyds Street for £3,000. To meet this C U S A. gave a loan from the New Era Fund of £1,500 at a low rate of interest, and a further loan from Trust Funds of £1,750 at business rates. In 1931 Mr. and Mrs. Dower went on holiday to England, where they made appeals for a building fund with such success that a sum of over £2,000 was available. Towards this Mrs. Arthur Lloyd, a friend of Mrs. Dower, gave a generous gift of £1,500, the Penge Congregation contributed £84, and Mrs. Dodgshun, a sister of Mr. Dower, raised £66. The present Church Hall, with its chaste appearance, both within and without, was the result. It was dedicated to the service of Almighty God on the 23rd of April 1932.

Mr. Dower's health requiring his removal to a lower altitude, his resignation was accepted with much regret in 1933. He subsequently became Secretary of C U S A., an office which he, with Mrs. Dower, filled with conspicuous ability. His death after only four years of service in 1937 was a real loss to the Denomination. Few men have done more to advance the cause he loved. He was the first Minister of both Yeoville and Pretoria, and his

conduct of C U S A. business in the responsible position of Secretary was ever wise and courageous. He was followed at Pretoria by the Rev. D. W. Ross of Lancashire College. Mr. Ross had been Minister in Leeds before coming to South Africa. He is one of a number of young Ministers to whom the Denomination looks for leadership in the years to come. A feature of his ministry is the interest taken in the young people of the congregation.

### **Pretoria.—The Coloured Church.**

In February 1897, J. D. Orr, of whom we have heard as a lay worker sent by the C.M.S. for service in the Transvaal, arrived in Pretoria to do what could be done for the small company of Coloured people (mostly from the Cape) who found themselves marooned in the Transvaal Capital. He was a tall, gaunt man, of little education, but with an abundance of the enthusiasm which overrides obstacles. Within two months he had signed a contract for £225, and laid the foundation-stone of a Church. Nine months later he opened a second Church for Natives, called Gaza; which he said "means blood, isn't it lovely?" By September the debts had all been paid. "Our brother" says the "Congregationalist," "takes care that his Churches shall not be in a position to pay him a proper salary." When the war came the Boer authorities allowed him to remain; but shortly after the arrival of the British he was expelled on charges made by members of his congregation, which the Executive thought trumped up. So exit Orr. Had he possessed the saving grace of wise understanding to balance his enthusiasms, he would have made a great leader. The keys of his buildings were handed to Richardson, and the C.M.S. were asked to nominate a successor.

In 1902 the Rev. J. B. Watson, fresh from Harley Bible Institute, arrived, having stopped for a time at the Paarl to learn something of the language, and of the conditions of Coloured work. He tells of his early struggles. He found a corrugated-iron building capable of seating 200, in which he held services and taught a school during the

week. The conditions were harsh, sufficient to daunt the courage of a less resolute man. He held on for three years, when the great depression so depleted the resources that he was unable to continue. He accepted a Call to Graaff Reinet, his place being taken by P. J. van Amsterdam, at that time a lay worker held in esteem by Charles Phillips.

In 1912 Watson returned to be the Minister of the Church and the Secretary of the Prisoners' Aid Association,—a dual position he held with much devotion and ability until his death in 1938. The Church prospered. He was a man of gracious spirit, quiet, industrious, determined, one to win the confidence and affection of all,—both European and Coloured. There are no outstanding events to record. There are not many Coloured people in Pretoria, and few opportunities for extension. Outstations were opened in new districts, particularly at Lady Selborne and in distant Pietersburg. In 1917 the old Church was entirely destroyed by fire, and was rebuilt in brick. Later a substantial school-room was added. Watson was succeeded by his son, the Rev. S. P. Watson, who undertakes both his father's social service and the charge of the Church.

### **Kimberley. (C.)**

In the C U S A. records for about 1883 Kimberley is described as the most important Missionary centre in South Africa. The description was correct. The wastes of Griqualand West were thronged with people of all races, come from all parts of South Africa, and the ends of the earth, in the pursuit of money. As in later days on the Rand, so in these earlier days, C U S A. set itself to meet the need. But C U S A. was not organised for expansion, and its resources in men and money were small.

At first it seemed that the Independency for which it stood would serve as the basis for a European Church. A community, or Union Church was planned. Among the Ministers who undertook the dusty journey to preach and

organise were Wilberforce Philip from Queenstown, and Fred Philip and James Macintosh from Port Elizabeth. A number of people became interested, among them George Bottomley, who attended at least one Congregational Assembly in the Church's interests. But the Church soon got into the habit of calling itself Presbyterian, though for a number of years it subscribed to the "Congregationalist" as its Church paper, contributed small amounts to Union funds, and had as Minister W. H. Richards, a recognised Minister of the Union. But its membership was predominantly Presbyterian, and when the Presbyterian Church of South Africa came into being it was one of the first to join, and so passed from our ken. A somewhat similar fate befel a venture at Beaconsfield, where for a number of years, the Rev. A. F. Bulmer was Minister of a promising Community Church.

Among the Coloured people our history has been equally disappointing, but in a different way, and for a different reason. Among the labourers on the Diamond Fields were the local Griquas and numbers of Coloured people from the Cape. The Griquas had for nearly a century been the charge of the L.M.S. which still had a nearby station at Barkly West, where the aged Ashurst was drawing near the end of a great career. The Coloured people were, for the most part, from our Churches in the Old Colony. But though the Griquas and the Coloured were of like racial and religious ancestry, they did not mix. They belonged to different social grades. CUSA. was too weak in men and money to take a firm grip, and there arose a welter of conflicting causes, a disgrace to the name of "Independent" to which they severally aspired. It would be unprofitable to follow the story. Not until the arrival of the Rev. A. G. Rainier in 1896 did some show of order emerge. Both Rainier and his wife were zealous for Christ. A site was secured by free gift from De Beers, money was collected, and in October 1896, Tyburn Street Church was opened. It was a neat and substantial building costing £1,100. The

plan was to make it a rallying centre for the many conflicting causes. But the spirit of discord continued. There was a suit-at-law to determine the ownership of a property at Barkly Road. Still there was some progress, until the war came in 1899 as, perhaps, a gracious interlude. In August 1903 Rainier returned to a great meeting of welcome held in Tyburn Street. The Churches at Green Point, No. 1 Location and Barkly Road linked up, and by consent the proceeds of the sale of the Barkly Road property, about £1,000, were invested in the joint names of the Union Secretary and the Rev. Matolo, for further Church building. So the work proceeded, until in July 1912 Rainer, who was school-master as well as Minister, resigned.

There followed a period of administration as a branch of the Ebenezer work. Distance and the cost of transport proving obstacles to progress, it was arranged that the Rev. W. Avery should come to reside in Kimberley, Ebenezer and Bree Street each promising subsidies of £37.10.0 each. Avery's ambition was to do for Kimberley what Charles Phillips was so successfully doing for the Rand. There was some progress. Churches at Barkly West, Homestead, Beaconsfield and Barkly Road were opened or resuscitated. A Manse was purchased and new members received. But the nemesis of strife continued. In 1921 Beaconsfield and Tyburn Street separated. Avery resigned. He was followed by the Rev. Saul Damon who served Tyburn Street and Beaconsfield from 1921 to 1924, and Beaconsfield alone from 1924 to 1928. The surrender of Tyburn Street was due to his conviction that no Christian Church could be built out of the discordances of the remnant. The great multitude, who should throng the Church of Christ, had been cast out by their own and others' strife.

Beaconsfield is now the leading Church with a membership of over a hundred. Tyburn Street building has been sold, but Barkley West and Winter's Rush with 65

members are still left to us. There are good buildings at all the centres, where good work could be done, if unity can be achieved.

### **The Native Church.**

The Native Church with its centre at No. 2 Location, has had a more peaceful career, though not entirely free from strife. Early names associated with the work are the Revs. Gwaai Tymzashe and Samuel Matolo. We shall hear of Tymzashe later at Mamabolos. Matolo after a period of useful service, left the Union to establish an Independent Congregational Church. The inevitable result followed. The Church he formed persisted with gradually declining fortunes during his lifetime, and the lifetime of a successor he appointed. It is now a mere shadow, knocking with feeble hands at the door of C U S A. for readmission. From 1918 to 1923 the work at No. 2 Location was under the Rev. S. S. M'bangela. It is now a valued part of the work of the Southern Group of the N.D.A.

### **Vryburg. (E.)**

The District of Bechuanaland, of which Vryburg is the centre, has an interesting history. For us the main interest lies in the Missionary associations. As we have seen in an earlier Chapter the first European to explore its wide spaces was an L.M.S. man, the Rev. J. Campbell, who in 1813 travelled to the Marico and mapped his course. Following him came the Kuruman Mission, with its outstations, bringing the peaceable knowledge of Jesus Christ to an ever-widening circle of Bechuana tribes. In the seventies of last century came the Republic of Stellaland, established by parties of Boer freebooters in defiance of native rights. Her Majesty's Government at the Cape and in London, looking for a man who might restore order without resource to arms, fixed upon John Mackenzie, an L.M.S. man, whose native name was "Tau," which means the lion. By shrewd common-sense and Christian forbearance Mackenzie persuaded the Stella-

landers to allow him to hoist the Union Jack on the Vryburg court-house. So the land became British, but it needed the Warren expedition to keep it so. Then followed the railway, first to Vryburg, then Mafeking and Bulawayo,—all the way along the Missionaries' road. With the railway came European settlers, changing the character of the country. White homesteads now stand alongside, or replace, the Bechuana villages. But the Missionary contacts are still maintained. At Tiger Kloof, seven miles from Vryburg, an educational Institution gives to the tribes a light and leading their fathers never knew.

It is natural that in such a land the European settlers should find in C U S A. their spiritual home. In the "Congregationalist" of March 1896 we read of a small community of from 50 to 60 meeting in the Town Hall for worship. Their first Minister, the Rev. J. M. Farries, has died after a brief ministry, but they have not lost heart. They have asked the Rev. W. Dower to draw plans for a Church with seating for 150, and are about to build. The L.M.S. gave a loan of £300, the people raised £400, and the building was opened for worship with a debt of £100 on May 9th of the following year, the Revs. W. C. Willoughby of Tiger Kloof, and A. F. Bulmer taking part. In the meantime their second Minister, the Rev. J. W. Steynes, had died after some few months of service. A Call was sent to the Rev. R. Olver of North End, Port Elizabeth, who came for a happy Ministry of eight years, during which the debt was extinguished and a Manse purchased. Among those associated with these early years none stand in higher regard than the Brown family. The death of Mrs. W. T. T. Brown in 1905 was a grievous loss. A tablet in the Church describes her as "A rare and capable woman, of high ideals, and beautiful life." The next Minister was the Rev. J. S. Moffat, for one year, and then came the Rev. Alban Heath from 1906 to 1910. During his Ministry the Amy Brown Hall was opened, free of debt, at a cost of £410. For the next five years the Minister was the Rev. W. Medhurst. On the



17th of December 1915 the Church celebrated its coming of age with a delightful social and Sunday services. Mr. C. Butler, the Church Secretary, spoke of the happy position of the Church, entirely free of debt, and with sufficient income to meet its modest needs. Major Dennison gave an interesting account of the early history of the District and Church. There followed two short ministries, Rev. A. Olver (1917 to 1920), and Rev. M. Richardson (1921 to 1924). Then for the next ten years the Rev. J. Thorpe Legg led the Church into an ever widening circle of usefulness. Realising the isolation of the farmers he began services for them. Thus Vryburg was led to its essential work, in ministry not to the town alone, but to all who could in any way be reached. Finding the constant journeys over rough roads too great a tax for a man no longer young, Legg resigned in 1934, and was succeeded by the Rev. S. P. Watson. With the strength and enthusiasm of youth, Watson continued and extended the country work. Also the old Church which had become a valuable business stand, was sold, and a new and beautiful Church was built alongside the Manse, which also was practically rebuilt. Vryburg has now an excellent Church property, a tradition of which it has reason to be proud, and a wide and useful sphere of service. On Watson's resignation there followed a short interregum, when Mr. G. A. Wright of Tiger Kloof did yeoman service. The present Minister is the Rev. Frank Harris.

### **Burghersdorp. (E.)**

The story of our Church at Burghersdorp is intimately associated with the families of Edward Hughes and E. Jukes Knight. Hughes was of Missionary extraction, his father having been on the L.M.S. staff in Bechuanaland. Knight was a Yorkshireman, with the fidelity of conviction and outspoken witness we associate with that County. Both were convinced Congregationalists. Sometime in the late eighties, the Wesleyans having failed to establish themselves, a small community Church was

organised, which was presently received into the Union, with as Minister the Rev. F. Percy Barret. There is a nice property, a good Church building and a comfortable Manse. Of late years the decline in the English-speaking population of the town, characteristic of all South African dorps, has made the position difficult. A country congregation, which serves a number of families of the Hughes stock, is well maintained, but the town congregation has shrunk to exceedingly small dimensions. For a number of years the Church, unable to support a full time Minister, has been served by arrangement from the Methodist Church at Aliwal North.

The story of the Church is intimately associated with the long and faithful ministry of the Rev. F. J. Ecclestone. Beginning in 1892 he served for two extended periods. During his absence in Australia the Minister was the Rev. J. Gould Layton (1902 to 1908). On Layton's retirement the Church turned to their old Minister, who returned, and continued in service until failing health compelled his resignation in 1917. He was a man of quiet disposition, with rare gifts of friendship, studious and faithful as preacher and pastor; a man strong in his conviction of the essential worth of a life hid in the counsels of God. Other Ministers who followed for brief periods were the Revs. W. Avery and W. E. Morgan.

### **Zeerust. (E.)**

On the Western borders of the Transvaal, in the Marico District, where as early as 1813 the Rev. J. Campbell of the L.M.S. describes the well watered valleys, and where in 1834 Robert Moffat cut wood for the roof of his great Kuruman Church, lies the little town of Zeerust. There in 1878 there grew up a little community Church. A number of families of British stock, some of them of Missionary antecedents, found themselves in need of religious sustenance. Among them were the Thomsons, the Poultnays, the Frosts and the Boyces. These were the foundation members. At first they had no regular ministry. They served among themselves as

they were able, sometimes a Wesleyan Minister gave them a service, and occasionally a Missionary on his travels would outspan his waggon for a Sunday, making a day to be remembered. Among these was J. S. Moffat, whose visit was long cherished, for he baptised a number of the children.

The first continuous ministry was that of the Rev. W. Aspden, an ex-Wesleyan Minister. He was followed by the Rev. J. Whitford, who died in 1897. We have no record of the opening of the present Church building, but it appears to have been planned during Whitford's Ministry, and opened after his death. From 1897 to 1903 the Rev. A. F. Bulmer was Minister, who made the first contact with Congregationalism by introducing the Congregational Hymn Book. He began work among the Natives, baptising the first Members of a Church which has grown to considerable dimensions, with branches at Groot Marico and Otto's Hoop. He was followed by the Rev. A. A. J. Andrews (1903 to 1906). Under his Ministry the building for the Native Church in the Location was erected. From 1907 to 1910, when he accepted a Call to Vryburg, the Minister was the Rev. W. Medhurst. Then came the Rev. W. E. Morgan (1910 to 1914). During his ministry the membership increased, a well-attended week-night service was begun, and the Sunday School shewed signs of growth. Also a monthly service at Vaalkop was started. On leaving because of his wife's health he writes: "We have been exceedingly happy here. The people are loyal and united, and there is scope for extension in the District." An added note shews a tendency which has been the lot of most country Churches of late years: "During my short Ministry ten of the most useful members have left the District." He especially regrets the departure of K. C. Cruickshank, "who has served as organist with much ability."

During Medhurst's Ministry the Church by unanimous resolution joined the Congregational Union. From 1914 to 1917 there was the short Ministry of the Rev. W. Avery. When he left an attempt was made to induce W.

E. Morgan, then in England, to return. In 1917, the death of J. Thomson Sr. was a sad loss. He was 83 years of age, had been forty years in Zeerust, was a Foundation Member, the Senior Deacon, and Honorary life member of the Diaconate. From 1920 to 1925 the Rev. J. Cliffe came from Turffontein to give a valued five years ministry. Then came the Rev. H. T. Binns, and in 1929 the Rev. A. F. Bulmer began a second period of service to the Church, which continued until increasing infirmity necessitated retirement.

### **Senekal. (E.)**

Some 100 miles to the North-East of Bloemfontein lies the flourishing little town of Senekal. It is a town with a future, for the district is good for farming, and the farmers (among whom are a sprinkling of English-speaking families) are progressive in their methods. During the days of the Orange River Sovereignty the spiritual needs of the community were served by Methodist Ministers from Ficksburg. But the people were not satisfied. They felt the need of a resident Minister. They came together, raised subscriptions, and in 1912 had the joy of laying the foundation-stone of the Senekal Free Church. The names specially associated with this venture include Mrs. E. Gibson, a Congregationalist, Mr. Gudath, a German Baptist, and Mr. Boyce, a Methodist. The Church had no denominational affiliations, and so it continued until 1938. They were served by such help as they could secure:—Pastor G. Watson of the Post Office Christian Association (1912 to 1919), Captain H. Ralls of the Salvation Army (1919 to 1921), Pastor B. Thomas, a Missionary from Zululand (1921 to 1923), Rev. B. H. Marshall of the Missionary Alliance of U.S.A. (1923 to 1927), Pastor Frank Evans of the S.A. General Mission (1927 to 1929), Pastor H. Wassenaar of the A.E.B. (1929 to 1933) and Pastor Harley Pryce (1933 to 1937). Then came the Rev. Sydney Webster of the Congregational Union.

During the quarter of a century changes had taken place in the community and in the world at large. The older generation were passing, and the younger people felt in the present day world, with its urgent problems and quick communications, a larger fellowship was necessary. The Church had always been run on Congregational lines, and the Minister was now Congregational. Application was made to C U S A. for affiliation, and in February 1939 a deputation, headed by the Moderator of the Northern District Association, visited Senekal to receive the Church into fellowship. There is a fine comradeship among the members, who rejoice in the wider vision and opportunity of their new alliance. C U S A. has an extensive Mission in the Free State with a vigorous branch at Senekal, but this is the only Church for Europeans in the Province.

**New Vale, later known as the Suto Group, and now as the Southern Group of Native Churches of the Northern District Association.**

Scattered throughout the Northern and Central Free State is one of our most effective Native Mission Churches with as staff, a European Supervisor, three ordained Native Ministers, sixteen paid Evangelists, and a host of Deacons and preachers. The membership of all the branches is given in the Year Book for 1938 as 1,359. Most, but not all, of the centres have their own Church buildings in the Location, simple structures, certainly not ornate, but sufficient for a simple people. The origin of the work is as fine an example of Missionary devotion as any in our annals.

When the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society withdrew from what is known as the Conquered Territory, a number of Christian Basuto, who had been under the Ministry of the Rev. Mr. Keck, were left without a spiritual home. A few years later as Mrs. Keck lay dying in Morija she said to her daughters gathered at her bedside, "My children, do not forget our Native

Christians in the Free State; if God should open the way be sure to go to their aid." Shortly after, as Miss Eugene Keck was returning from Bloemfontein, she met one of her father's old converts, who told her that a farm called New Vale, a few miles from the Basutoland border, was for sale. "Missie", said the old man, "buy that farm and gather on it your father's scattered flock." To her and to her sisters this was a call from God. They pooled their resources, bought the farm, gathered such of their father's flock as they could, and built for them a beautiful little stone Church. When the work grew beyond their powers they invited their friends, Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Goring of Morija, to come over and help them. So the work began. But as yet there was no ordained Minister capable of giving Sacraments. Application was made to C U S A., and on November 20th 1904, a great gathering of Basuto was held at New Vale to witness the ordination of their beloved leader. The Ministers taking part were the Revs. J. P. Ritchie, D. S. Carlyle and D. W. Drew. The work continued to expand. In 1906 three Branch Churches were opened within a radius of ten miles from the central Station.

But such local expansion could not satisfy the needs of the people, nor the aspirations of the New Vale folk. In March 1907 Boshof was occupied, on the far Western border of the Free State. In July of the same year came Winburg, and in July 1908 a small Church building was put up at Ladybrand. In October 1911 the work, which A. Damane had for many years carried on in his own house, received a building, and in May 1919 work was begun at Hobhouse. These are but a few of the stations opened during these expanding years. Christ's parable was coming true, the little seed planted in faith was growing into a great tree whose branches covered the earth. When the Union Representative visited in 1921 he reported that nearly all the towns of central and Northern Free State were scenes of the New Vale work. For this expansion help was needed. In 1909 A. Sello was ordained at New Vale with appointment to the im-



portant sphere at Boshof. After eight months Sello died at his post. A. Damane was then sent to Morija to prepare himself to take his place. On the 18th of August he was ordained at New Vale. Four years later two other Native brethren trained under Dr. Dexter Taylor, were ordained and added to the staff. These three, now growing old in years, but ever young in heart, are still the beloved Ministers of the Mission.

In 1919 the Rev. J. F. Goring, who from the first had served with no thought of reward, save the privilege of doing good, accepted appointment as Secretary of C U S A. This meant living at Johannesburg, where he would still be near enough to give partial oversight to the work of his three Native Ministers. But failing health soon led to his retirement from the Secretaryship, and later from the Mission. He had never recovered from the loss of his wife, whose close fellowship with the work, and with him in the work, had been the mainstay of his life.

The problem of supplying Goring's place occupied the careful thought of C U S A. leaders for a number of years. An attempt to carry on with such supervision as Martin Dower could give as Minister of Yeoville, and later as Moderator for all Native work, did not succeed. Then the Rev. E. A. Dugmore was engaged by C U S A. as full-time Minister in charge. For ten strenuous years Dugmore carried the burden with marked ability, sparing no trouble, and shrinking from no journey, if he might in any way accomplish his Master's will. In all he was ably seconded by his wife. From the first beginnings, work among the women of the Churches was the special care of the Misses Keck. Womens' Associations under local leaders were an essential part of the work at most of the stations. But the Misses Keck were by now growing old, and without the help of Goring's car were unable to carry on. Mrs. Dugmore found in the work a wonderful opening for her motherly instincts. She accompanied her husband on many of his journeys, often spending weeks from home, finding shelter by the wayside with such sleeping accommodation as the car or a friend's



hospitality might afford. The women and children of the Free State came to love her as a mother. In addition, when her husband moved to Johannesburg to add the care of the L.M.S. mine boys to his tasks, she undertook the keeping of the Mission's books.

When the strain of frequent journeys began to undermine Dugmore's health he retired to take up scholastic work at Tiger Kloof. This again raised the question of supervision. In a Mission of so many scattered units, and in the special conditions prevailing in the country districts of the Free State, European supervision of some kind is essential. But the cost was proving too great for C U S A. finances. A meeting was held at Tiger Kloof in 1937, which led to the Rev. G. P. Ferguson taking charge as Supervisor, with Mr. J. E. Fernie in charge of the finances.

### **Mafeking. (N.)**

Everyone has heard of Mafeking, for it came into great prominence during the Boer war. It is the centre of administration for the Bechuanaland Protectorate, where so much of the L.M.S. work lies. C U S A. ought to be better represented than it is. All that we have is a small Native Church, which is one of the difficulties of the Northern District Association. The membership is too small to support a Minister, only 89, and there are racial divisions. The foundation members were Xosa, but the area is largely Bechuana, and the two races do not readily mix.

The Church was opened on Christmas day, 1896, the leader being Johannes Sidzumo. The Rev. R. Olver, then at Vryburg, was much interested, and was present at the opening. During the siege this building was destroyed, the Government giving compensation of £129. A new building was then erected at a cost of £310, for which the C.M.S. gave a grant of £30, and a loan of £100. This the Rev. R. Olver dedicated, March 28th 1902. It is a substantial building of brick under iron roof.

For a time the L.M.S. undertook the charge on behalf of C U S A., but found it impossible to continue. From 1931 to 1932 the Rev. G. T. Matebesi was resident Minister, but financial difficulties led to his retirement. The charge was then undertaken by the Southern Group, but as their work lies far to the South, the nearest station being at Kimberley, this proved too costly. Attempts to link the work with Vryburg or with Zeerust have hitherto proved unavailing. Want of unity among the people coupled with distance from a suitable administrative centre, are the difficulties. Mr. S. Makhele is now in residence as Evangelist in charge.

#### **Mamabolas. (N.)**

In the far North of the Transvaal, among the foothills of the Zoutpansberg, is a Mission Church, whose romantic story is as near the heart of things African as anything in our records, not excepting the early L.M.S. days. Sometime about 1833 Kamel Raphela was born at Mamabolas. Some fifty years passed of heathen life in a heathen land. Kamel, now grown to the fulness of manhood, went to Port Elizabeth to work in the offloading of ships, that he might earn money to buy a gun. With him were two younger men, Molamla and Molaba. The three were drawn to the preaching of the Rev. J. Pritchard of Edwards Memorial Church, where they saw the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Thrilled with the new life they went to Kimberley to the diamond diggings, where they attached themselves to the ministry of the Rev. Gwaai Tymzashe. In Kimberley they laboured together in the Gospel. But Kamel was not content. He longed to carry the good news to his own people. On arrival at Mamabolas he presented himself to the Chief as one who had discovered the hidden things. The Chief ordered that the Word should be kept secret, lest the people be led astray. Forbidden public utterance Kamel went from house to house in the secret of the night. Some heard and believed. The converts were brought before the Chief, flogged and banished. They went to

Likgalies, in the near neighbourhood, where also some received the Word. The Chief, hearing this, was moved to relent. Kamel was recalled, and the converts were gathered with much rejoicing to form a Church. A letter, which took many months to reach its destination, was sent to Gwaai Tymzashe asking for a Minister.

When Tymzashe read the letter he knew he was called of God. Leaving Kimberley he journeyed with all his possessions, a train of two waggon, some milch cows, a pair of horses, and all his family. As guide he had Molamba. It was a perilous journey, for the roads were mere tracks, and the Boers unfriendly. It was the time when gold had just been discovered on the Rand, and there was much unsettlement. On the Rand Tymzashe was arrested, and sent handcuffed to Pretoria where he was lodged in jail. His wife pleaded with the President, who ordered his release, and gave a pass allowing the party to proceed. Tymzashe spent six years in Mamabolas, where his work was blessed. Seven stations were opened at Spelonken (now under the Swiss Mission), at Sebasa, Mamabolas, Molepo, Makhatho, Mpahleles, and Lokhalies, where Petros Maphoto is still a Deacon, old in body, but young in heart, with many a story to tell of the early days. His health failing, Tymzashe returned to Kimberley, where he died in 1897.

There being no Congregational Minister available the work was transferred to the Presbyterians, but the people were ill content. Kamel died in 1911, still yearning for the Church which had first given him light. The great war came, and some from the station joined the labour contingent for service in France. There they were greatly delighted to meet two Congregational Chaplains, H. C. W. Newell and B. Kondlo. On their return they sent messengers to Johannesburg to plead with the Fathers to receive them once more as their children. The Revs. G. Crawford Stanley and J. F. Goring went to investigate with the result that the Church, or rather group of Churches, was received once more into the Congregational fold. They were received into the Suto Group, but

the distances were too great for satisfactory oversight. Many fell away, but a core of the faithful remained. In 1934 their patience and their pleadings were rewarded when the Rev. E. S. H. Skosana came to be their Minister. At first Skosana had a hard time, for the poverty of the people, and the continued droughts made finances difficult. But courage and sacrifice are winning the day. Skosana is one of those Ministers whose patience amid difficulty is maintained by a living faith. New Churches and schools have been opened, converts have been won from the surrounding heathenism, and something of the early spirit has been revived. It is proposed to place a memorial tablet in the central Church in memory of Gwaai Tymzashe, and a head-stone on the grave of Kamel Raphela, the two fathers of the Mission.

### **Work in Rhodesia.**

In April 1896 news was received in Cape Town that the C.M.S. were about to commence work in Southern Rhodesia. The times were stirring. Rhodes' Pioneers had crossed the wide tracts of Bechuanaland, travelling by the Missionary Road, had broken the power of the Matabele, laid out farms, explored the ancient gold workings, and were building cities of which Bulawayo and Salisbury were chief. The Jameson Raid was no Christian act, but it stirred the Christian Churches to action. The C.M.S. gave a grant of £500, to be spread over three years, and selected the Rev. Arthur Giles of Hackney College for the adventure.

When Giles arrived in Cape Town in July of 1896 he was unable to proceed. The country was too unsettled. He was a quiet, modest man, of some parts, but in the opinion of many lacking in the qualities which make the pioneer. When at last he reached his destination he secured from the Chartered Company the option of sites in Bulawayo and Gwelo on condition that buildings were erected of a given value, and within a given time. Next year the Secretary of the C.M.S. the Rev. J. Burford Hooke visited South Africa, and extended his journey to

Bulawayo. There he organised a Committee with Advocate Tredgold as convener. Several things were becoming apparent. There were a number of Congregationalists in Bulawayo, some of them young men of promise. Among them were sons of the L.M.S. Missionaries, who for two generations had conducted a Mission to the Matabele. The population was settling into the normal ways of civilized life, and Church life of all denominations was becoming established. But Arthur Giles, though early in the field, had failed in the race, had mounted his bicycle and ridden off across the veld to try again at Gwelo.

A second and more promising attempt was made a few years later. In 1901 the Rev. J. G. Aldridge, a Methodist Minister, objecting to certain restraints put on him by his Superintendent, had left the Connexion taking a number of the congregation with him. He was a man's man, peculiarly suited to the easy ways of a new country. He soon had a crowd about him who met in the Magistrate's Court Room. D. Carnegie and C. D. Helm, well-known Missionaries of the L.M.S., supported his appeal to the Union for recognition. Next year, on July 13th, 1902, a Congregational Church was dedicated to the service of Almighty God in the town which a few short years before had been the site of one of the most blood-thirsty tyrants of African Native life. Money appears to have been plentiful, for by December 1902, the cost of the building, £3,294, had been all but paid by voluntary contributions. In 1904 Aldridge attended the Assembly at Cape Town, where his reports of progress roused much interest. There were crowded congregations, 400 in the evening with 60 gathered about doors and windows. It was good to feel that the Union was so vigorously represented in the new land which few at that time had visited. But it was a one-man Church. When Aldridge accepted a Call to Aliwal Street in Durban, it died as rapidly as it had sprung to life. It had endured four years.

### Gwelo. (E.)

At Gwelo Giles settled down to quiet, steady, plodding work. Until he was joined by an Anglican Priest he was the only Christian Minister in the whole district. He gathered the people, conducted services, visited the sick, pleaded with the erring, and collected money,—the C.M.S. helping. In 1898 he was proudly established in a small but neat wood-and-iron building, the first Church to be erected in the rising township. He writes: "I do not care to speak of progress, it is so small and slow. My congregations average twenty. For the past month I have not had a single lady in the services." He pleaded for a second Minister with a roving commission to work more especially at the new mining townships of Selukwe and Globe and Phoenix. In June 1900 he returned to England for health reasons. He left a Church which has continued as a centre of Gospel light to the Rhodesia Midlands.

Succeeding Ministers have been J. R. Truscott, Hawley Bryant, G. P. Fuller, and R. J. Bowen, each of whom remained for about four years. They were all C.M.S. men, appointed, and to a large extent supported, from London. Truscott marked the change from the mining camp to the town by opening a day school in the Church of which he was the teacher. But the number of children was only five. With these five he organised a Sunday School. Sometimes there were considerable intervals between the departure of one Minister and the arrival of his successor, but the Sunday School was never closed. Mrs. A. E. Bourne and Mrs. E. Cornish were teachers, whose work is bearing fruit still in all parts of Rhodesia and beyond. The Church grew slowly, and as it grew there was extension in the district. In 1913 a hall was opened at Iron Mine Hill where regular services were commenced, and still continue. In 1918 the Rev. A. Hoad was sent by the C.M.S. as Assistant Minister in charge of Umvuma, but did not remain. The chief extension was at Sebakwe of which we shall presently tell. In Bowen's time we hear of classes for Church membership,



the growth of the Sunday School, and the reception of new Church members. When he left the Sunday School numbered 70 scholars with five teachers.

In 1920 the Rev. W. W. Hitchings began a Ministry which continued for some twenty years. A new building in brick, one of the handsomest Church buildings in Rhodesia, took the place of the old wood-and-iron structure, which was transferred to the Location for the use of the Natives. Hitchings was much interested in education and in the public life of the community. On his retirement in 1939 the work was, by mutual agreement, transferred to the Presbyterian Church of South Africa.

#### **Que Que, formerly known as Sebakwe or Globe and Phoenix. (E.)**

There is romance about the gold mines of Southern Rhodesia. Scattered through wide regions are the remains of old workings whose origin no man knows. There are cuttings running down to the water level, and never below. With modern machinery these cuttings are now followed to deeper levels, and gold-mining is today a chief industry of the Colony. Some forty miles from Gwelo is the Globe and Phoenix, said to be one of the richest mines in the world. Here the Rev. R. Truscott began services, travelling to and from Gwelo on his bicycle. The work grew with the growth of the mine. In 1904 the C.M.S. appointed the Rev. Thomas Downham as resident Minister. Downham did good work. A small wood-and-iron building was erected; also a small school-room where he opened and taught in the first school. His five years ministry laid the secure foundations of an enduring Church life. He was succeeded by Mr. A. Lunn, a lay Pastor, who consolidated the work begun by his predecessor. When in 1916 the Rev. R. Bowen was appointed to Gwelo the two Churches were placed under his care. Rail communications by this time made such a joint pastorate workable. Bowen is still affectionately remembered at both places. When Hitchings followed



Bowen in 1920 he assumed the double responsibility, visiting Que Que every second Sunday. During her husband's absence Mrs. Hitchings took the Gwelo services. In 1928 a fine little brick Church replaced the old wood-and-iron building which had been riddled by white ants. Mr. W. Grant, a member of the Church, was architect and clerk of works. Que Que has been fortunate in its workers. Mr. E. Mannix must surely hold a record, for he has been the only Church Secretary since the foundation of the work in 1904. Mrs. J. A. Anderson has led the Sunday School for many years, a leader in a band of women workers, whose influence continues as an abiding power for good. In the early years Mr. Theo. Haddon, son of a much-beloved Deacon of Bree Street, was Manager of the Globe and Phoenix, and a helpful influence in Church life.

By 1928 the growth of the community and of the Church made it desirable that Que Que should again have a separate pastorate. H. I. Webb was sent by C U S A., and in the following year was succeeded by S. P. Watson. Both these young men were students for the Ministry. In 1930 the Rev. F. A. Fitch was ordained in England, and came out for the work. He has proved himself as an energetic and successful shepherd of souls. The work among both the European and Native people of the town and neighbourhood has been expanded. A friend writing of the Church says, "Mr. Fitch is making his mark for good in Que Que and district."

# SOME RECENT LEADERS IN CHURCH LIFE.



Rev. S. J. Helm.



Rev. James Cameron, D.D.



Rev. J. Martin Dower



Mr. G. H. Dunn.



Rev. G. P. Ferguson, M.A.



## APPENDICES.

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### I. The financial resources of C U S A.

From its inception in 1877 to the end of the century the financial resources of C U S A., apart from the annual contributions of the Churches, were nil. The auditor's report published in the Year Book for 1939-40, give the available assets as in the neighbourhood of £90,000.

Some of the major items are:—

|                          |      |      |        |    |   |
|--------------------------|------|------|--------|----|---|
| Asher Trust              | .... | .... | £1,013 | 2  | 5 |
| Capital Reserve          | .... | .... | 3,268  | 5  | 0 |
| Forward Movement Capital |      |      | 10,000 | 0  | 0 |
| L.M.S. Trust             | .... | .... | 20,937 | 17 | 7 |
| New Era Fund             | .... | .... | 19,814 | 11 | 3 |
| Dower Memorial Suspense  | .... |      | 15,628 | 11 | 6 |
| Brotherly Help           | .... | .... | 2,062  | 13 | 7 |
| Superannuation           | .... | .... | 3,286  | 3  | 7 |
| Widows and Orphans       | .... | .... | 12,296 | 0  | 8 |
| Ikwezi Capital           | .... | .... | 3,350  | 0  | 0 |
| Education Fund           | .... | .... | 400    | 0  | 0 |
| Reserve Grant Fund       | .... | .... | 689    | 2  | 4 |

In 1877 the annual income available for all purposes was about £300. Today it is over £4,000.

### II. Summary of Statistics.

The statistics published in the Year Book 1938-39 are summarised:—

#### Church Members:

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| European | 3,043  |
| Coloured | 24,807 |
| Native   | 9,275  |

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37,125

#### Adherents:

|          |        |
|----------|--------|
| European | 2,683  |
| Coloured | 20,989 |
| Native   | 11,296 |

---

34,968

|                                  |        |
|----------------------------------|--------|
| Sunday School Scholars: European | 3,063  |
| Coloured                         | 15,749 |
| Native                           | 4,619  |
|                                  | <hr/>  |
|                                  | 23,431 |

### III. PUBLICATIONS OF C U S A.

1. **Year Books.** These have been published continuously since the formation of the Evangelical Voluntary Union in 1859. The first were small, mere unbound pamphlets. The main contents have not varied,—reports of proceedings, lists of Churches, Ministers and Evangelists, financial statements, etc.

2. **The Congregationalist.** This is a monthly Magazine which has been published continuously since 1896. It is the official organ of the Union, containing news of the Churches, reports of Assemblies and of Executive Meetings, short articles of a religious character, and other items of interest to the Churches.

3. **Die Kerkberig.** This is a small paper in Afrikaans, containing notes on Sunday School lessons, and other matters for the use of our Coloured Churches.

4. **Die Gesang Boek.** This is a Hymn Book for the use of the Afrikaans-speaking Churches. It has become a standard book for the Coloured Churches, both within and beyond our denomination. The early editions contained translations of English and other hymns, hymns originating in Holland which were considered suitable, and original compositions by the Missionaries. The Rev. F. W. Kolbe collected these, adding a considerable number of his own composition. The book so published was his own property which he bequeathed to C U S A. The copyright is now vested in C U S A. It has been revised and enlarged, and is a property of some value.

5. **The Xosa Hymn Book.** This is a Hymn Book for the use of the Xosa-speaking Churches, arranged, revised,

and issued by a Committee of the Presbyterian and Congregational denominations. It is printed at Lovedale, to which Institution the copyright belongs.

6. **The Xosa Service Book** for the use of the Xosa speaking Churches.

7. **Die Boek van Beheer en Tug.** A book of advice for the guidance of the Afrikaans-speaking Churches in the conduct of Church Meetings and other essential business.

### NOTE ON COLOURED EDUCATION, AND THE TRAINING OF A COLOURED MINISTRY.

From the earliest days of the L.M.S. education has been a primary interest in our work among the Coloured people. Before Bethelsdorp, among the herd of forlorn refugees at Botha's Post, van der Kemp had a school and published a spelling-book. At Bethelsdorp, Uitenhage, Graaff Reinet, Pacaltsdorp, Paarl,—all the early stations, and in each of the later stations as they were opened, a school was a first consideration. Dr. and Mrs. Philip were leaders in all that concerned the enlightenment of the people they served. They introduced from England a system of primary schools which became the model on which all the early education for both Europeans and Coloured were based. These schools were all elementary, not because the Society discouraged higher education, but for lack of pupils. Early attempts to establish a centre at Hankey for higher education were unsuccessful. The forebears of the present generation of eager young men and women who clamour for admission to Dower College, the Athlone Institute and other similar Institutions were, for reasons which are sufficiently obvious, content with the barest rudiments of education.

During Philip's time attempts were made to secure a trained Coloured Ministry. When the scheme to create Independent Churches by the withdrawal of foreign

agencies was first mooted an essential part of the plan was that they should be served by Ministers whether European or Coloured, called by the Churches, and trained in South Africa. Arrangements for training at Hankey were made, but without success. There were no candidates. The gap between the elementary school and the training centre was too great. There were many excellent Deacons, who as preachers could win converts and hold the attention of congregations, but none with sufficient ability to feed the flock and conduct with success the business of a Church.

The first Coloured man to be ordained, if we except James Read Jr. whose mother was Coloured, was Arie van Rooyen, of Blinkwater, who was ordained by Freeman in 1850. He had no training in our sense, but was a steady, reliable man who had taught school, and under James Read served in the Kat River with some success. He sent his two sons James and Timothy to Lovedale, where they had such training as the times provided. James served at Uitenhage, and Timothy at Bedford and Bethelsdorp. They had disappointing careers. The Churches were not sufficiently advanced to respect Ministers of their own race. Success demanded not only the training of Ministers, but also the education of congregations. A more ambitious case was Nicholas Goezaar, who after completing his Lovedale course, was sent by the Evangelical Voluntary Alliance to Stellenbosch, where he completed the studies set for the training of European Ministers for the Dutch Reformed Church. He was ordained in 1868, and was called to succeed Robson at Union Church, Port Elizabeth.

These were the only Coloured Ministers available when C.U.S.A. began its career in 1879. The situation at that time was desperate. The old Ministers who had come out under the L.M.S. were dying, and there were none to take their place. Unless relief could be obtained the whole structure, built up by the sacrifices and prayers of many years, must collapse. None felt the urgency more than the Rev. T. Durant Philip, who as Minister



# Dower Memorial College, Uitenhage.



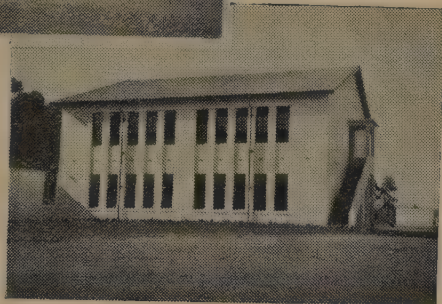
Domestic Science  
and other  
Class Rooms.

Girls' Hostel.



Boys' Hostel.

New Block of  
Class Rooms.  
Built 1939.





at Hankey had neglected no opportunity to urge upon the Churches the highest of all callings. In 1883 he returned from England with definite proposals. He had secured from the L.M.S. an endowment of £2,500, and the promise of a diminishing grant, beginning at £300 a year, for the establishment of a joint Theological School at Lovedale in which the two Presbyterian Societies then operating in South Africa would take a share. Philip was appointed the Congregational Tutor, and in 1885 took up his residence at Lovedale. For the next ten years, both in the class-room, and in his tours and appeals to the Churches, he gave his strength to the cause. Again there was disappointment. The only Coloured students were A. Sampson and F. Scheepers, and for part of the time J. C. Weis. In 1895 Philip, now aged, retired, and no successor was appointed. The scheme had cost the Union far more than it could afford, and more than the results justified. Yet it had produced Weis, a happy augury of what might come in the fulness of time. Lovedale continued to offer hospitality for any Congregational students who might apply, and the L.M.S. again came forward with the appointment of first one and then another tutor at Hankey.

In 1900 the whole scheme for the education of the Coloured people came under drastic revision. It was resolved to focus attention on the training of teachers. While keeping the door to the ministry ever open, it was felt that the prior requirement was the staffing of the schools with a well-trained body of men and women of their own race. The L.M.S. again came to the rescue by the appointment of the Rev. and Mrs. J. H. Walton to open the Training College at Hankey. Out of this grew the present Dower College at Uitenhage. The Government gave substantial and increasing grants, the real need of the times was met, and the Waltons proved the right leaders for the enterprise. They threw themselves wholeheartedly into the work, receiving the pupils into their home, giving them not only the education of books, but the far more valuable stimulus of personal contact.

The work grew. Beginning with a handful the number of students had grown by 1910 to fifty. Success in the examinations was from the first excellent, and a steady stream of well equipped young men and women, whose heart was in both school and Church, was sent forth to vitalise the homes of the people.

The story of the growth of the Institution is too fresh in memory to require detailed narrative. By 1920 it had so grown that, at the instance and with the assistance of the Education Department, it was transferred to its present central position at Uitenhage. Other training centres, notably Athlone Institute at Paarl, which owes much to the sympathetic leadership of the Rev. W. H. Lloyd, have been opened, but none has so great a claim on the affection of our Coloured Churches as Dower. The standard of education throughout the Churches has been raised. There is a growing sense of self-respect, and capacity for self government. Part of the original plan was that the Dower Institution might come to provide facilities for theological training, but the claims of the school have been too insistent. Plans have now been made for the training of a limited number of Coloured students for the ministry at Port Elizabeth. It is yet too soon to say what the success will be. It may take a generation or more, but it seems safe to prophesy that the time will come when in the Church as in the school, the Coloured people will be served by those of their own race.











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